the weekly
Standard

MAY 11, 1998 $2.95

AT LAST, ZION: ISRAEL AND THE FATE OF THE JEWS

BY CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

Newt Attacks Clinton
FRED BARNES

A Plagiarist Defends Clinton
PHILIP TERZIAN

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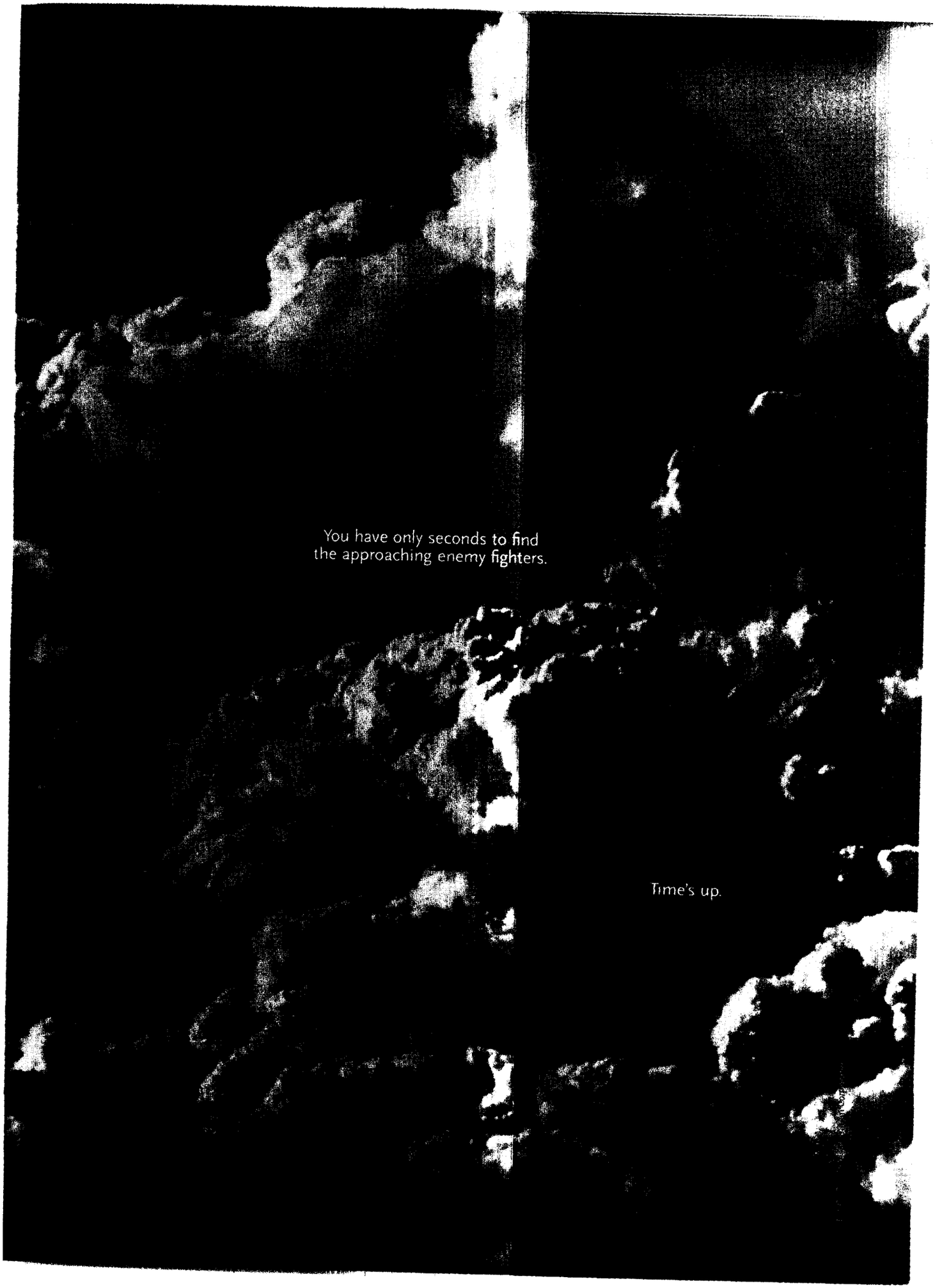

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"Congress took that money... under a solemn contract... to be spent only on roads - federal highways. Instead they are hoarding it... to make the federal deficit *look* smaller... It is just as wrong as it can be and we ought to stop it."

– *1991, Governor* Bill Clinton, *when asked about the Highway Trust Fund*

Mr. President, with 42,000 people dying every year on America's highways, now is not the time to change your mind.

By law, all of the money going into the Highway Trust Fund is supposed to be used in a timely manner to improve the safety and efficiency of our nation's highways. But now President Clinton and some in Congress want to lock up the money to make the federal deficit *appear* smaller, or they want to spend the money on things other than road and public transportation improvements. By doing so, they place the safety of our nation's highway users in jeopardy.

Support truth in budgeting. Use the Highway Trust Fund solely for transportation improvements.

President Clinton believed the misuse of the Highway Trust Fund was wrong when he was governor. He can correct this injustice by freeing the Highway Trust Fund and using the money as it was intended.

A message from the Alliance for Truth in Transportation Budgeting and the Transportation Construction Coalition.

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Standard

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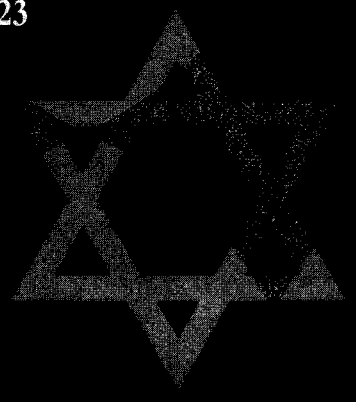

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The Audit Bureau Member

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Richard Cohen's Tangled Webb

Poor Richard Cohen. The Scrapbook's favorite liberal columnist, who usually writes entertainingly and often manages to think independently at the very same time, must have gotten suckered by his sources last week. Cohen's Tuesday column in the *Washington Post* was a full frontal defense of convicted felon and former number-three man in the Clinton Justice Department Webster Hubbell.

Cohen was anguished over how Republicans on the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee have "trampled" Hubbell's civil liberties. They have "leaked" jailhouse recordings of Hubbell's telephone conversations with his wife, Suzy. The contents of those conversations, Cohen insisted, are "in no way incriminating." They are instead "just the sort of personal matters between family members that is no business of yours and mine."

In June 1996, for instance, Webb and Suzy had an intimate talk about what she would make for dinner: grilled veal "and lemon butter and then a light pasta to go with it." Of course, Cohen allows, "if the conversations suggested that Hubbell had indeed received $500,000 or so to keep quiet about what he knows about the Clintons, then their publication might make some sense."

Ooops.

Whoever slipped Cohen excerpts of the conversations left out all the good parts. *Nightline* ran hugely entertaining portions of the tapes two nights later, full of the sort of "personal matters" you might expect—how presidential adviser Bruce Linsdey was "livid" over a decision of Attorney General Janet Reno to refer something to Ken Starr; whether Hubbell would have to "roll over" again to protect his former law partner Hillary Rodham Clinton; and similar pillow talk.

And The Scrapbook has obtained a full transcript of the "lemon butter" recording Cohen wrote about. The Hubbells' conversation might even be considered—contra Cohen—incriminating. It primarily concerns the nervousness of various Clinton cronies about what Hubbell planned to write in his forthcoming memoir. Here's the key passage:

Webb: I'm not going to breach any . . . I'm not going to breach anything personal. I think that's what you can tell Mickey.

Suzy: Good.

Webb: And I, there . . . when people want things to be private, they will always be private with me.

Suzy: Okay.

"Mickey" is Clinton counselor Mickey Kantor, one of two primary fixers behind Webb Hubbell's $700,000 in no-show job contracts. Before they said goodbye in this phone call, Webb also asked Suzy to reassure the other primary fixer, "Vernon" (Jordan), about Hubbell's willingness to remain mum.

The Scrapbook trusts that Richard Cohen will be more suspicious the next time Webb Hubbell's friends try to spin him.

Don't Shoot, Partner

There was a great deal of discussion last week about Bill Clinton's "moral authority." Then at week's end came a vivid reminder that it is not only by their personal comportment but also by their official conduct that presidents can squander their moral standing.

At their planning sessions for President Clinton's June summit in Beijing, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and the Chinese foreign minister were giddily chatting about a new "strategic partnership." Meanwhile, indispensable *Washington Times* national security reporter Bill Gertz revealed that there are 13 Chinese nuclear missiles aimed at American cities. Gertz's revelation of the secret CIA report on the missiles, confirmed by government officials, means that the president was either lying or didn't know what he was talking about when he made his sappy announcement a year and a half ago that "there is not a single solitary nuclear missile pointed at an American child tonight, not one. Not a single one." Or maybe he was just being Clintonesque: You know, there isn't one solitary missile; it's a baker's dozen!

This, then, is how China defines "strategic partnership": We aim, you duck. And at the same time the missile story was breaking, Albright, at the American Chamber of Commerce in Beijing (an appropriate venue), was bragging about how hard the administration is working to remove sanctions that "impede your ability to do business in China," including business in "satellites and nuclear cooperation." The Albright team further announced that the official ceremony greeting Clinton's arrival for the summit in late June would be held in—yes!—Tiananmen Square, where the Butchers

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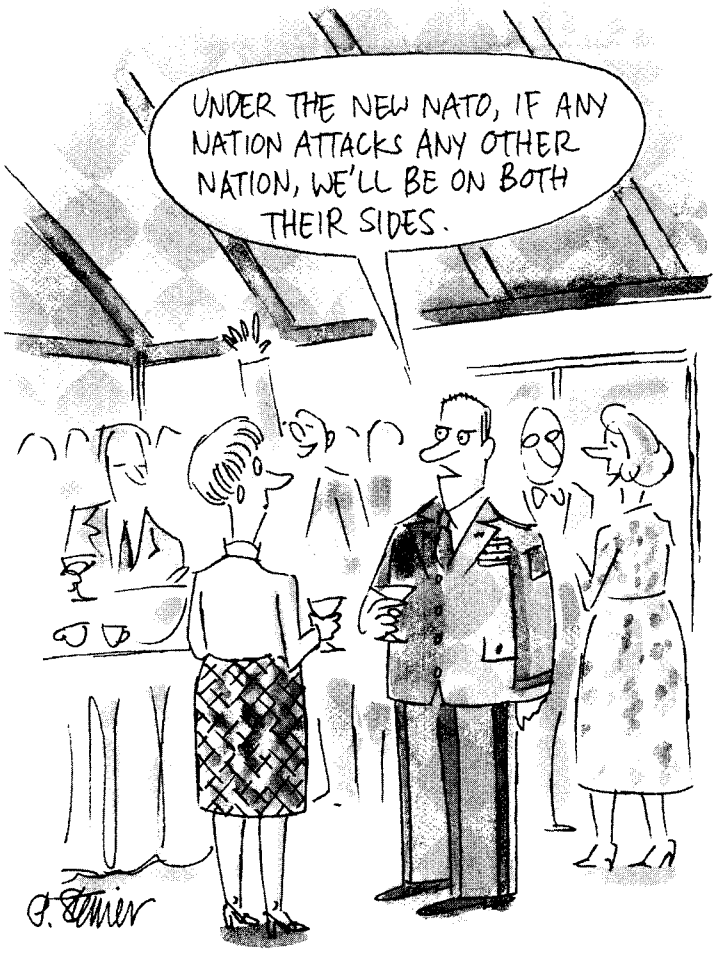

of Beijing crushed the students' uprising in 1989. No word as yet whether there will be a side-trip during the summit to the graves of those killed in the crackdown, the better to celebrate the new "partnership" with a dance.

You Can Run, But You Can't Hyde

Chairman Henry Hyde of the House Judiciary Committee won't be emulating Newt Gingrich and loudly criticizing President Clinton for stonewalling and worse. But Clinton should not take heart. Hyde is as appalled as Gingrich at Clinton's effort to cover up the truth, obstruct independent counsel Kenneth Starr, and hamper congressional investigations of White House wrongdoing. And Hyde will be playing a major role, soon.

Hyde hasn't talked to Starr, but Republican leaders expect the independent counsel's report early this summer. And that raises a problem. How can Republicans handle the report without playing into the hands of Clinton's agents on the committee, John Conyers and Barney Frank?

If the report is kept under lock and key (because it contains sensitive grand-jury testimony), Conyers, Frank, and other senior Democrats will still be among the handful with access. This means they'll pass on whatever's incriminating to the White House. And so even before any evidence is released publicly, the president's men will be spinning away and steering the news with their well-known panache.

What to do? The Scrapbook has heard several ideas. Here is the cleverest so far: Starr would first dispatch a one-page letter of referral, notifying the committee that the Clinton case is in its lap. That would be followed by the full body of evidence, probably truckloads.

Of course, this material would not be publicly released. But Starr would also send a thorough executive summary of the evidence, leaving out only material that might compromise the secrecy of the grand jury. The committee could vote to release this summary almost as soon as it arrives. Thus, the public would know the basic narrative and many details of the case before Sid Blumenthal, Paul Begala, and Rahm Emanuel had a chance to begin marathon spinning. Nothing in the independent-counsel statute bars Starr from providing such a summary. And with only Republican votes, the committee could make it public instantly.

We're Smarter Than You Are

Okay America, how dumb are you? According to members of the Clinton administration, pretty dumb. Seventy-seven percent of administration officials believe Americans don't know enough about public issues to make wise decisions, according to a survey done by Pew and the *National Journal*. Meanwhile, 81 percent of career bureaucrats believe Americans are not knowledgeable enough for self-government.

Respect for the public is slightly higher on Capitol Hill. There, 31 percent of officials believe the public is capable of making wise decisions, while 47 percent do not. So that's the view from Washington: We know better.

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Casual

Temping Fate

I just finished reading a new essay collection on the future of the labor movement. Half the articles were about how horrible "temporary employment agencies" are; the other half were about the importance of learning skills on the job. Where do these experts think people are going to get this on-the-job training? I got mine temping.

In my early twenties, I decided I was not going to "sell out" and go to law school, or apply to work for some investment bank. Nope. I was going to be a poet. Luckily, I had four friends of a similarly lyrical bent, and we all wound up living together in a dingy apartment in Cambridge. While waiting for inspiration to strike, we subsisted on bargain beer and macaroni and cheese, slept through the afternoon, smoked like fiends, and hung around listening to music until the money ran out.

When the money ran out, what did we do? We went to Kelly Girl. Because temping was the only line of work that allowed you—once you had enough money to begin the beer-cigarettes-and-naps cycle anew—to *stop work immediately*. For those of us who Put Poetry First, this was no small matter.

My first temp job was typing grant proposals at the Boston University Department of Communications Disorders. BU then had (maybe it does still) the world's leading center for the study of speech problems, from lisping to cleft palates to aphasia. The whole staff seemed to have been picked from among its undergraduate patients. The receptionist, for instance, answered the phone with a spirited, "C-c-c-communic-c-c-cation Disorders!" It was a fun-loving group, and at lunch our whole lisping, stuttering, stammering crew would file out to the Rathskeller in Kenmore Square for Budweisers and reubens. (I'd communicate the orders.) On my last day, my boss approached me to say, "We're really going to miff you."

Then it was on to the Lemuel Shattuck Memorial Hospital in Jamaica Plain. This was a real slum hospital, full of Medicaid patients and the dying young. I transcribed case reports off a Dictaphone, and they were uniformly horrifying: "16-year-old HIV+ black male presented with eight 9-mm gunshot wounds to chest," or "19-year-old white male presented after gouging out right eye and drinking a pint of carbolic acid." Trying work, while it lasted.

Merrill Lynch came next. There, I wound up working for a kindly old Brahmin stockbroker we'll call George Barkstrap. On the first or second day, he asked me if I knew his daughter Roxy, who had been in my college class. *That* threw me. Roxy Barkstrap was an unhappy, you could even say anguished, girl. Halfway through her sophomore year she'd shaved her head and taken to wearing T-shirts that said "Lesbo Power" and "F— the Breeders." She had never greeted me without a scowl. What do you say to your boss in that position?

I said, "Yes, I know Roxy. She's a sweet girl."

George beamed till I thought he would cry. "Yes, she is," he said. From then on, he took me for an unusually sensitive reader of human character and filled my days with such assignments as, "Go to the company library. Get the *New Yorker* and find some articles you want to read. Come back this afternoon and I'll explain to you what a 'leveraged buyout' is."

Pleasant as the Merrill Lynch job was, it brought me back into contact with some of the more odious of my classmates—the "sell-outs," as we used to call them back at the apartment as we argued beerily about what to put on the stereo next. These were the dweebs we'd never considered quite stylish enough to invite to our parties. Now they were picking up airline tickets to Hong Kong from their multiple secretaries and giggling derisively as I scampered down to the typing pool to fetch the coffee.

Well. "Good to get that learnt," as Philip Larkin once wrote. Temping was basically a low-stakes way of learning to work before you knew what you wanted to work at. The lessons of your first job are mostly generic ones: how to wake up, how to dress presentably, how to be polite. Not long after I'd left temping for a "real" job, I was taken out to dinner by a banker friend we used to call—even to his face—"The Bloated Plutocrat." The restaurant was pricey and the service abysmal.

After one particularly long delay, B.P. hammered the table. When the waiter, a whipped-looking fellow of about 23, arrived, B.P. looked up and said, "You sure are a lousy waiter."

"I'll have you know," the kid said sniffily, "I'm not a waiter by calling."

"What are ya?"

"I'm an *actor*."

My friend snorted and said, "Well, act like a waiter, then!"

The big revelation one has on one's first job is *Boy, do I not want to do this for the rest of my life*. There are worse ways than temping of figuring that out.

Christopher Caldwell

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"THERE THEY GO AGAIN!!"

Wait a minute. Isn't electricity deregulation supposed to *cut* utility bills for millions of American families?

That's what Congress is promising. And that's what folks expect. Honest, cost-cutting competition that will bring rates down.

Problem is, the fat cat investor-owned utilities don't want competition that pits their higher rates against the lower rates of locally owned utilities. The Big Boys are afraid of losing their hold on millions of captive consumers.

Instead of finding ways to cut costs for *their own* customers, these investor owned utilities are spending millions lobbying Congress to keep locally owned utilities off the competitive playing field.

Their plan to "level the playing field" is to convince Congress to pass legislation that would protect their many tax breaks and force higher rates for the 40 million public power consumers in thousands of communities from coast to coast.

That's some plan they've cooked up—continuing the tax breaks for the investor-owned utility monopolies and raising rates for millions of families and businesses.

The promise of deregulation is reduced rates. Customers expect and deserve lower electricity bills. Make sure the Congress doesn't give them a shock.

To learn more about state and locally owned utilities, visit our web site at www.lppc.org, or call the Large Public Power Council at (202) 955-1244.

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HIGHWAYS, FOR GOOD AND ILL

Fred Barnes makes a common but fundamental error when he dismisses all mass transit ("In Praise of Highways," April 27). He writes that "in most cities, only those who can't afford a car (the young, old, and poor) are willing to take a bus or train." While this is largely true of buses, it is definitely not true of rail transit.

In our study *Conservatives and Mass Transit: Is It Time for a New Look?* we pointed out the success of Chicago's Metra commuter rail system in attracting those riders who could drive to work but prefer to take the train. Of Metra's riders, 20 percent have incomes over $50,000. The difference between bus and rail riders is dramatic in Lake County, which Metra serves. The mean earnings of rail commuters were more than $76,000; for bus riders, the figure was less than $14,000. In 1996, only 3.9 percent of Metra's riders had no car, 52.3 percent had two cars, and 85.6 percent had a car available for the trip but preferred the train.

The same is happening on other rail systems. Of St. Louis's new Metrolink light-rail-line riders, 60 percent used to drive alone. Of the passengers on Vancouver's West Coast express commuter rail system, 75 percent are new to public transit. As in St. Louis, Dallas's new Dart light-rail system is carrying more riders than forecast.

People who have cars will choose transit when transit service is of high quality, which usually means rail systems. The latter normally serve urban cores, where land costs make new freeways hideously expensive to build while rail lines are already in place. Sound transportation policy makes use of both transit and highways, letting each do what it does best.

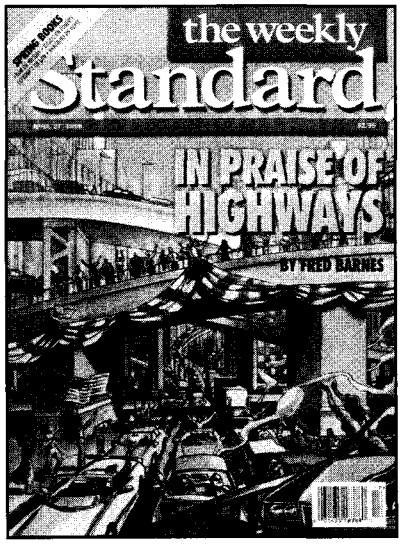
PAUL M. WEYRICH
WILLIAM S. LIND
FREE CONGRESS FOUNDATION
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Fred Barnes has accomplished a remarkable feat. In seeking to explode six myths about highways, he has created or perpetuated six new ones:

1) *Building more highways will cure congestion.* According to highway engineers' own "fundamental law of traffic congestion," drivers gravitate toward new lanes until those lanes fill, and then they race to the next least-congested lanes. Gridlock is simply transplanted, not solved. Trying to cure gridlock by expanding highways is akin to trying to cure obesity by loosening your belt.

2) *Cars allow "flexibility, mobility, and speed in getting around."* Does Barnes drive into and out of D.C. during rush hour? If so, he's spending more time on the road each day, as 2 percent more automobiles join the commute each year while road mileage stays the same.

3) *"Freeways, by spurring commerce and tourism, actually slowed the demise of cities."* In fact, the more pervasive effect was to suck the stable middle class with



wheels out of the city, cutting the carless poor off from jobs as companies moved to the suburbs and thus causing urban tax revenues to plummet.

4) *"The way goods are now produced and sold in America virtually mandates the use of trucks."* In fact, truckers can't deliver "just in time" because of lengthening urban gridlock. H.L. Hunt, among other megatruckers, now sends a third of its freight by rail for this reason.

5) *Public-transit advocates are liberals and tree-huggers.* In fact, not only are congressional conservatives appalled at out-of-control highway spending, but Paul Weyrich has mounted one of the most passionate and well-reasoned cases for public transit.

6) *People ride cars and not public transit simply because they prefer to.* In fact, they ride cars because America's highway lobby has effectively kept the $2.25/gallon in external costs of driving—air pollution, keeping foreign pipelines open, time lost in congestion, patrolmen, and traffic courts, among others—from being tacked onto the 18-cent gasoline tax. If people paid $3 to $4 a gallon for gasoline, as they should, they'd surely drive less.

STEPHEN B. GODDARD
HARTFORD, CT

Kudos to Fred Barnes for his defense of highways as good for Americans and worthy of support by libertarians and conservatives. Barnes effectively debunks a number of anti-auto/anti-highway myths that have been propagated by environmentalists and urban planners and swallowed whole by reporters and commentators over the past two decades.

I must differ with Barnes, however, on his strong defense of the federal highway program and the egregious, pork-filled ISTEA reauthorization measures enacted by the House and Senate in recent weeks. Those, like Barnes, who appreciate the benefits of an automobility system ought to be working hard to devolve surface-transportation funding and responsibilities from the feds to the states.

The centralized federal program has been captured by anti-auto/anti-highway interest groups to a considerable extent. Thanks to the "flexibility" incorporated into the 1991 ISTEA measure, nearly half of all federal gas-tax dollars can legally be spent on non-highway purposes—and this year's reauthorization will only make things worse (as indicated by the bill's overwhelming support from the planner/enviro/transit coalition). By contrast, most states still dedicate most or all of their gas-tax funds to highways.

The federal program also loads federal dollars with costly and intrusive strings: anti-billboard rules, metric conversion, speed limits, Buy America provisions, blood-alcohol standards—to say nothing of the hugely costly Davis-Bacon requirements. It blatantly redistributes gas-tax revenues away from populous, fast-growing states that are choking on traffic to build more extravagant highways than would otherwise get built in places like Alaska, Hawaii, and Montana. And by creating

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the illusion of "free federal money," the federal program provides strong incentives to build projects that don't pass any kind of reasonable cost-benefit test (including the ridiculous $7 billion Los Angeles rail system).

As more Americans come to understand the raw deal they're getting from the federalized program, devolution should continue to gain supporters over the next few years. Conservatives who agree with Barnes about the value of auto-mobility should embrace this important aspect of shrinking big government in Washington.

ROBERT W. POOLE JR.
REASON FOUNDATION
LOS ANGELES, CA

It's hard to disagree with Fred Barnes's praise of highways. However, if the federal financing system were dismantled, individual states would be in a position to transform their road systems into state-owned commercial road companies. Road users, through their representatives on the company boards, could then determine the level of payments into state road funds and oversee expenditures.

Barnes appears to have forgotten Will Rogers's suggestion: "The way to deal with traffic congestion is to have business provide the roads and government the cars."

GABRIEL ROTH
CHEVY CHASE, MD

Fred Barnes's recent paean to highways was a welcome rebuttal to some conservatives' strange affection for mass transit, and an effective argument for investing in highways. But my former boss erred in arguing that the federal government should retain responsibility for building new interstates.

Federal funding means fewer roads, particularly in states (such as my home state of North Carolina) that are net donors in transportation. There are at least two reasons why.

First, the federal government, unlike most states, does not operate a real highway trust fund. That means that a significant share of user fees paid by drivers ends up funding federal non-transportation programs.

Second, federal funds bring costly federal strings. The Reason Foundation recently added up these costs—e.g., the costs of grants administration and the Davis-Bacon Act, which forces federal projects to pay union-scale wages—and found that federal funding increases the price of infrastructure by up to 27 percent. And that doesn't count the interest states could have earned on their highway-fund deposits if they hadn't been forced to park the money in federal treasuries.

Barnes is absolutely right about the economic, social, and moral superiority of highways. But the best way to pour more asphalt is to let states keep and spend their own dollars.

JOHN HOOD
JOHN LOCKE FOUNDATION
RALEIGH, NC

Barnes's insightful cover story was truly refreshing and long overdue. He correctly notes the importance of the highway system to the American economy. More than $4.4 trillion worth of products—72 percent of the total value of commodities shipped annually in the United States—are transported on the nation's highways. In addition, more than 42,000 jobs are created for every $1 billion invested in highways.

The total value of our transportation infrastructure is $1.5 trillion, which accounts for one-eighth of all tangible productive assets in the economy. This represents 10 times the value of all computers being used by U.S. businesses and eight times the value of the communications infrastructure!

More important, we should be investing in our highways to protect the safety of motorists. The Federal Highway Administration estimates 30 percent of highway fatalities are caused in part by inadequate highway conditions. These 12,000 deaths each year cannot be prevented solely by improving driver behavior or by building safer cars, but rather by investing in better highways.

Barnes criticizes conservatives for their attacks on the highway bill. The debate about investment in America's transportation infrastructure shouldn't be about conservatives vs. liberals or Republicans vs. Democrats. It's not about pork, either. It's about a sound economy, and it's about saving lives. It's a solid investment for the future.

T. PETER RUANE
AMERICAN ROAD & TRANSPORTATION BUILDERS ASSOCIATION
WASHINGTON, DC

GOLDEN COINAGES

I share Joseph Epstein's desire to "become immortal" by inventing a phrase that enters the language ("A Wordsmith's Lament," April 13). I have already invented a phrase, but had to duck any suspicion of credit to avoid being fired.

The phrase was "golden parachute," meaning the big payments executives of merging firms guarantee themselves in case they lose their jobs.

I coined it in 1981 as a PR man in Washington when my company became the target of a takeover. The company's quarterly stockholder statement disclosed that several of the company's top officers had voted themselves large guaranteed payments if they lost their jobs after any takeover. The news was devastating to employees, who felt not only abandoned but betrayed.

A friend of mine with the *Wall Street Journal* called me to talk about it. She was helping the reporter who was writing about the takeover battle. She asked about the quarterly statement's disclosure, and I referred to the executives' "golden parachutes."

The phrase did appear in print and became instantly accepted as a shorthand phrase for what many firms were doing. But it appeared under the byline of the reporter, with whom I had never spoken.

Now, of course, like any creator, I'd like credit for coining a phrase. As Epstein asks, "What do you have to do around here to become immortal, anyway?"

JOHN E. HEANEY
BETHESDA, MD

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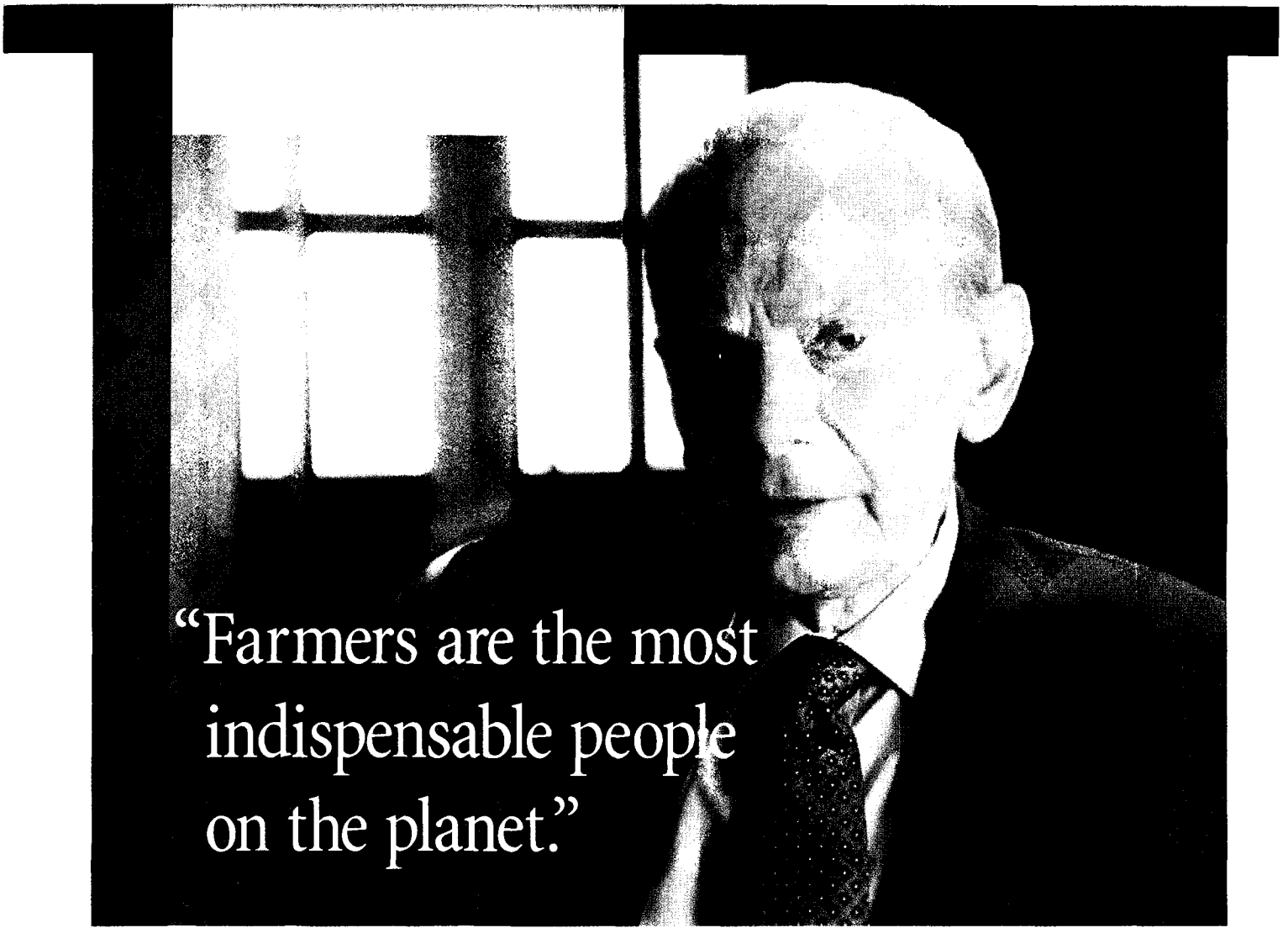

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the weekly Standard

SID VICIOUS

White House ideologist Sidney Blumenthal flew up to Cambridge, Mass., two Thursdays ago to give a speech at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. We are living in history, he reminded his audience. We are witnessing the epic struggle of Bill and Hillary Clinton to fashion something called "one-nation politics" from the ashes of Reaganism. There are, to be sure, "hostile forces that seek to confound and destroy one-nation politics and all that it promises." But civilization will out, and whether they realize it or not, the barbarian Republicans are defeated already. The president's poll numbers prove it.

Now, Sidney Blumenthal is a famously annoying and obnoxious man. He sneers a lot, he quotes from his own books, and he has a brain that is more machine than organ of genuine thought—whirring away in overdrive to neutralize any fact or argument that might complicate his schoolboy crush on the First Family. Still, El Sid does have at least one endearing quality. Like certain varieties of venomous snake, he is kind enough to offer physical warning cues whenever he is about to spit and bite.

IF A SENIOR PRESIDENTIAL AIDE HAD LAUNCHED AN ASSAULT ON ARCHIBALD COX DURING WATERGATE, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN FRONT-PAGE NEWS.

The nasal whine slows down and drops a tone or two. The maddening grin disappears. The eyebrows arch. The lips purse. It happened at the very end of Blumenthal's prepared remarks in Cambridge. "And now," he whispered after a dramatic pause, "I will be more responsive to the question about Mr. Starr."

Rattle, rattle, rattle. *Hisssssssssss.*

During Watergate, if someone like John Ehrlichman, speaking with the president's imprimatur, had launched an assault on Archibald Cox at a major American university, it would have been front-page news across the country. But we have now had five-plus years of "one-nation politics," and the media's capacity for astonishment at White House behavior is no longer what it used to be. So only the *Boston Globe* was on hand to report Sidney Blumenthal's official pronouncement on the independent-counsel investigation into President Clinton's Whitewater and Lewinsky crimes. And the *Globe*'s account was extremely abridged.

Here, then, in hideous detail, is what the "assistant to the president" actually said:

> We are plunged, at least in Washington, into a politics of defamation: a consuming world of innuendo, false witnesses, illusion, leaks, and smears. The abuse of the office of the independent counsel by Kenneth Starr is a transparently disguised attempt to destroy this presidency. The original intent of the office of the independent counsel was to remove it from politics. But Starr is profoundly political in his intent.
>
> The problem is not simply the largesse from Richard Mellon Scaife, the eccentric right-wing billionaire; Starr's numerous conflicts of interest, ideological and financial; his speeches at Pat Robertson's university; his alliances—brazen alliances—with individuals determined to inflict whatever damage they can on the president.
>
> It is not simply that he has assembled a crew of prosecutorial pirates with lengthy records of prosecutorial abuse, and installed a deputy, Hickman Ewing, a religious fanatic, who has proclaimed that he operates from a presumption of guilt.
>
> It is not simply that Ken Starr has jettisoned the language of the law, speaking now of "defilers of the temple," the apocalyptic rhetoric of a zealot on a mission divined from a higher authority.
>
> The ultimate problem is that in his fervor he is waging an assault on American rights, that he is engaged in an anti-constitutional destructiveness.
>
> He assaults freedom of speech and the right to petition the government. He has attempted to impose his very own Sedition Act. He abuses the grand jury to act out his personal temper tantrums and harass critics. He leaks with abandon, in violation of grand jury rules, criminal rules, and legal tradition. He uses the instruments of intimidation and smear without restraint.
>
> Ken Starr is a figure whom the Framers sought in

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their design to have rendered impossible: an inquisitor of unlimited, unchecked power. Starr, however, lacks any skepticism about his own certitudes, or even any sense of his own unfamiliarity with criminal law. His lack of knowledge of the Constitution is glaring. His doctrine that the First Amendment is "concerned with the truth" is precisely the doctrine the First Amendment was enacted to prevent.

But Starr is sure he knows the truth and that he should be its judge. His self-righteousness, his insecurity, his partisanship, his breathtaking hypocrisy, have fueled an onslaught on rights that is unethical, illegal, and always political. Now he has appointed himself Grand Inquisitor for life.

Ken Starr is on an endless quest—if not for vindication, then of vindictiveness. But I am certain that in historical retrospect this perverse episode will be viewed in its proper perspective, as Jefferson viewed the Alien and Sedition Acts: in his words, a "reign of witches."

Well. If any senior White House official has ever before uttered something even half as reptilian as this, that utterance remains a secret. Because Hickman Ewing prays each morning, doesn't drink, and attends the Fellowship Evangelical Church of Memphis, he is a *religious fanatic*? Sidney Blumenthal is a creature of the dark. Nearly every word out of his mouth is a poisonous lie. The fact that Blumenthal gets paid with public money to slither up and down the eastern seaboard like this is, all by itself, an outrage.

And now, after Harvard, Blumenthal's continued service in the Clinton White House is more than just outrageous. It represents something of a constitutional problem.

Kenneth Starr, you see, files his courtroom pleadings on behalf of the United States. He is an officer of the executive branch, fulfilling a core executive function—the investigation and prosecution of federal crimes—under legislation signed into law by the chief executive: *this* president. In other words, Kenneth Starr, too, works for Bill Clinton.

And Bill Clinton has a constitutional duty to take care that the laws are faithfully executed. If one of his employees, Kenneth Starr, is abusing the laws—as another of his employees, Sidney Blumenthal, now publicly alleges—then Bill Clinton is obligated to direct the attorney general to fire the independent counsel immediately. If, however, the president rejects this conclusion and chooses to retain the independent counsel, then he imposes on himself an equivalent obligation to fire Sidney Blumenthal immediately. Blumenthal has called a central executive responsibility, the prosecutorial power, into question and disrepute. He has deemed an ongoing criminal investigation, one ultimately supervised by the president, wholly illegitimate. He has thereby encouraged potential witnesses not to cooperate with that investigation, subverting the law's very purpose, and challenging Bill Clinton's authority to uphold it.

One of these two men, Blumenthal or Starr, must go. The Constitution isn't big enough for both of them. And President Clinton will be violating his oath of office if he pretends otherwise.

—David Tell, for the Editors

Newt Plays Offense

by Fred Barnes

House speaker Newt Gingrich is the Republicans' newly self-appointed attack dog, excoriating President Clinton and congressional Democrats for crippling the investigations of White House abuses. Had Republican leaders been asked to pick an appropriate spokesman, they probably wouldn't have picked Gingrich. But they weren't asked. Nor were they asked to craft a new strategy of confronting Clinton and the Democrats. Gingrich, after months of hesitation, simply stepped forward April 27 with a full-throated attack. He didn't tell House majority leader Dick Armey, whip Tom DeLay, or conference chairman John Boehner of his plans. Nonetheless, the effect was to install a tough new strategy of taking on the president and the Democrats—and not only on the campaign-finance and sex scandals. House Republicans are well on their way toward shredding Clinton's entire policy agenda.

Republican leaders have an unusual working relationship. Gingrich, Armey, DeLay, and Boehner meet frequently, then go their separate ways. They are independent agents. For two months after the Monica Lewinsky story broke on January 21, all of them went along with Gingrich's strategy of silence. The speaker insisted the press was playing up the scandals sufficiently without Republican help. But as Clinton fought back aggressively (without answering any questions) and his poll numbers rose, House Republicans grew restless. On March 19, DeLay broke ranks and implored the president "to come forward with the truth." He informed Gingrich of his speech only an hour beforehand. Three weeks later, Armey visited a

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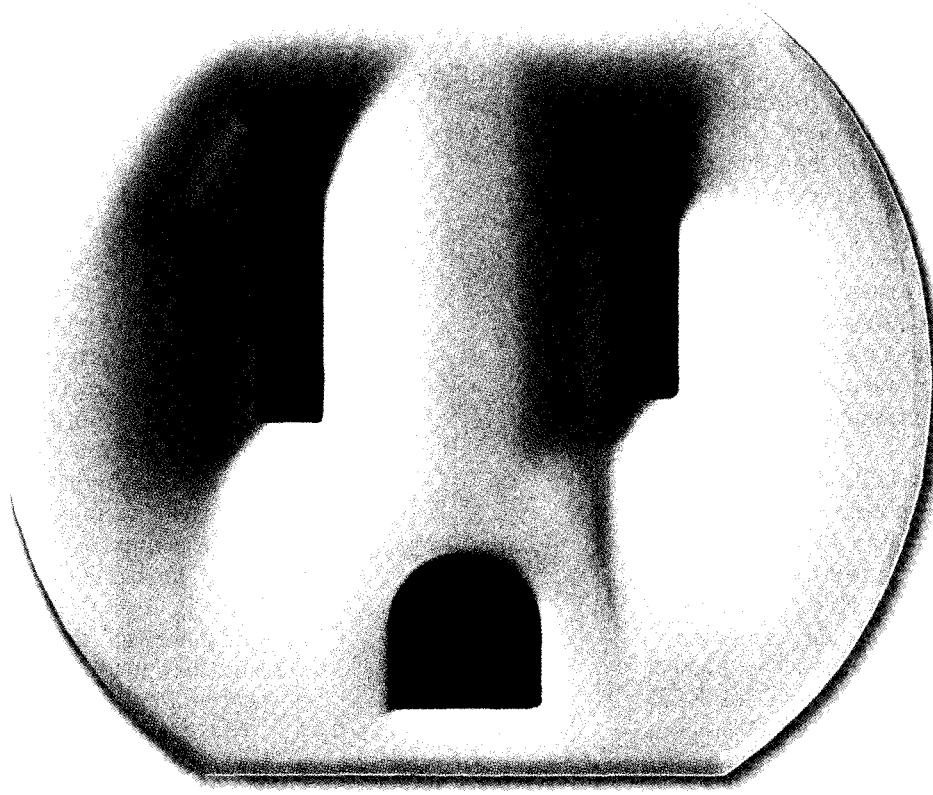

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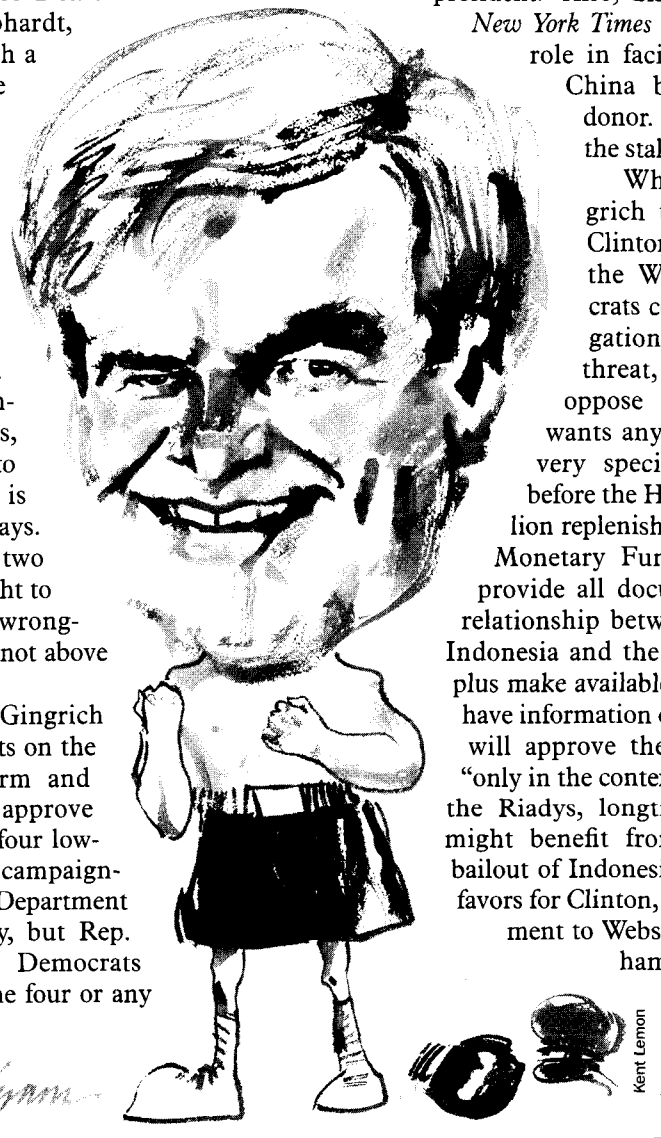
Texas school and accused Clinton of being "shameless." Now, Gingrich has joined in, insisting that Clinton and the Democrats are responsible for "the most systematic, deliberate obstruction of justice, cover-up, and effort to avoid the truth we have ever seen in American history."

So the strategy is set, and Gingrich says he won't back down, even as Democrats and the media try to make *him* the issue. House Democratic leader Richard Gephardt, for instance, wrote Gingrich a hasty letter demanding he remove himself from any congressional inquiries into campaign abuses or scandals. "I think I can outlast that," Gingrich told me. "I did with Jim Wright. You just have to stay calm." Gingrich, of course, stuck with his crusade against then-speaker Wright for years, eventually forcing Wright to resign. "What I'm doing is very cautious," Gingrich says. His criticism stresses two points: The public has a right to know about presidential wrongdoing, and the president is not above the law.

The turning point for Gingrich was the refusal of Democrats on the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee to approve immunity on April 23 for four low-level witnesses in the campaign-finance probe. The Justice Department had okayed the immunity, but Rep. Henry Waxman said Democrats wouldn't approve it—for the four or any other witnesses—out of disgust with chairman Dan Burton. Gingrich stewed about this for days, noting to aides that one of the potential witnesses worked for the largest Chinese cigarette company. Waxman, he said, was hypocritical in subpoenaing American tobacco company heads to appear before the committee, but letting the Chinese tobacco executive off the hook. To punctuate the point, Gingrich displayed a pack of Red Pagoda Mountain cigarettes at leadership meetings. More broadly, he concluded, Democrats were active participants in a White House-led cover-up.


Kent Lemon

Gingrich also fumed over Clinton's assertion of a privilege for Secret Service agents to keep them from testifying in independent counsel Kenneth Starr's Whitewater investigation. The privilege claim was frivolous, he thought. Agents don't operate on the "Roman-emperor model of a Praetorian Guard," he says. "The Secret Service doesn't serve the president. It serves the American people by protecting the president." Also, Gingrich was infuriated by a *New York Times* story revealing Clinton's role in facilitating an arms sale to China by a major Democratic donor. "That dramatically raised the stakes," he says.

What are the stakes? Gingrich threatened to block any Clinton legislative requests until the White House and Democrats cooperate with the investigations. That's mostly an idle threat, since Republicans will oppose most of what Clinton wants anyway. But Gingrich has a very specific demand to be met before the House considers an $18 billion replenishment of the International Monetary Fund. The president must provide all documents touching on the relationship between the Riady family in Indonesia and the Clinton administration, plus make available all witnesses who might have information on the subject. The House will approve the money, Gingrich said, "only in the context of knowing" how much the Riadys, longtime friends of Clinton, might benefit from the continuing IMF bailout of Indonesia. The Riadys have done favors for Clinton, including a $100,000 payment to Webster Hubbell, Hillary Rodham Clinton's former law partner and later a top Justice Department official, after he was convicted of stealing from the Rose Law Firm.

Gingrich's willingness to hold up the IMF funding represents a switch. When IMF funding was first discussed months ago by GOP leaders, he was for appropriating the $18 billion. DeLay was flatly opposed. Armey's position was that, at the least, an anti-abortion provision should be added. Now, Gingrich has created a condition that makes funding highly unlikely. Meanwhile, Republicans are ready to block payment of past United Nations dues, pare down anti-

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Sweden Cuts Tobacco Tax By 27% In Bid To Curb Smugglers.

Source: *Financial Times*, Wednesday, April 15, 1998.

OTHER COUNTRIES GET IT. WHEN WILL OURS?

Sweden is learning, as Canada did a few years ago, that massive taxes on tobacco products can create a black market. Some experts believe the U.S. may be about to learn the same lesson. Washington is getting ready to raise the price of tobacco products so high, it would create a black market and provide our children with unregulated access to cheaper tobacco products.

According to the Fraternal Order of Police, legislation now being considered "will have the net effect of increasing the number of criminals on the streets, undercutting the achievements of law enforcement in this country, and exploding the ranks and profits of organized crime."

How did this happen? Politicians were aided and abetted by some typical Washington accounting.

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tobacco legislation, pass a budget with larger than expected spending and tax cuts, and pepper Clinton with popular, conservative education proposals he's likely to veto. Armey met privately with Clinton in March in hopes of persuading him to sign a school-choice bill for Washington, D.C. Clinton said he wouldn't, but Armey went ahead and pushed the bill through the House on April 30.

For sure, there's a big political component in Gingrich's newfound combativeness. Boehner says there's a "new political landscape," in which Clinton is far weaker than previously believed. Gingrich, Boehner suggests, was merely the last to recognize that "we need to get on offense." Rep. David McIntosh says Republican leaders had trouble explaining how the be-nice-to-Clinton strategy was going to help the GOP win seats in the November midterm election. "If we are going to have a chance in the fall," McIntosh says, Republicans must drive down Clinton's poll numbers. Gingrich's attack on the president shows that, finally, the speaker agrees.

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

THE PLAGIARIST'S SALON

by Philip Terzian

WHO TO BELIEVE in the war of words between *Salon*, the feisty Internet magazine, and journalists who complain that its "scoops" and well-publicized charges against the *American Spectator*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and other publications are little more than nuggets of disinformation, sponsored by the White House? This is not a close call for someone like me, who has been contributing to the *Spectator* since 1975: I assume that my acquaintances tell the truth. For disinterested observers, however, the choice is not so easy.

This past Sunday, Tim Russert, of NBC's *Meet the Press*, interviewed *Salon*'s Washington correspondent, Jonathan Broder, about his assertions that the *Spectator* paid cash to Whitewater witness David Hale in exchange for dirt on the Clintons. And two days before that, the *Washington Post*'s media reporter, Howard Kurtz, wrote a long, voluminously detailed piece describing Broder's work for *Salon*, and the sniping that has broken out between Broder, *Salon* colleague Murray Waas, and Clinton partisans like Joe Conason of the *New York Observer*, on the one hand, and their critics.

NO MATTER HOW ANYONE MAY FEEL ABOUT NOVAK, "DISHONEST" IS A CURIOUS ADJECTIVE TO ESCAPE THE LIPS OF JONATHAN BRODER.

Kurtz described a world-weary, slightly bemused Broder, a veteran "low-key and measured" foreign correspondent "with the patient air of a man who's covered his share of wars." And a journalist who doesn't walk away from a challenge: Asked to comment on columnist Robert Novak, who has been critical of *Salon*'s reporting, Broder described him as "dishonest and politically malevolent. I wouldn't call him a journalist."

Well, no matter how anyone may feel about Novak, who is certainly capable of defending himself, "dishonest" is a curious adjective to escape the lips of Jonathan Broder. For the one feature of Broder's career that neither Howard Kurtz nor Tim Russert saw fit to mention—and the singular detail that tells us all we need to know about Jonathan Broder—is his experience as a plagiarist. And therein lies a tale.

In March 1988, Jonathan Broder was fired from his job as Middle East correspondent for the *Chicago Tribune* because he had plagiarized a story by Joel Greenberg in the *Jerusalem Post*. As often happens in such instances, Broder's friends in the business were sorrowful rather than angry. Thomas Friedman of the *New York Times* lamented the fall of a "fine reporter," and Marcus Eliason of the Associated Press invented a novel rationale for Broder's duplicity: "This was a case of using another person's words to describe a situation he had been in himself." Most interesting of all were the words of Broder's boss, *Tribune* editor James Squires: "This was an aberration," he declared. "There is an explanation for what happened," he added, "but there is no justification."

The explanation, of course, was that Broder had stolen Greenberg's words and published them as his own. And Squires and his colleagues at the *Tribune* knew perfectly well it was no aberration. Seven years earlier, in August 1981, when the United States shot down two Libyan jets in the Mediterranean, the *Tri-*

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bune transmitted a profile of Col. Qaddafi, by Jonathan Broder, over the wire. I remember the occasion well. I was associate editor of the *Lexington* (Ky.) *Herald* at the time, and as I read Broder's piece, it became quickly evident that he had lifted generous portions of a two-month-old *Newsweek* story on the Libyan dictator. After reading the texts, I telephoned Jack Fuller, editorial page editor of the *Tribune*, and advised him, as a courtesy, to compare Broder's profile and the *Newsweek* article. Fuller, who is now president of the *Tribune*'s parent company, agreed to do so; and shortly thereafter a kill advisory for the Broder piece came over the wire.

I never heard from Fuller, but in 1988 I did write to Squires to suggest that Broder's theft of Joel Greenberg's piece was no aberration. Squires is famous for his volcanic temper, and my reward was a nasty rejoinder which I cherish among my papers. (Squires subsequently resigned from the *Tribune* and was last seen in service, briefly, as H. Ross Perot's adviser-spokesman in 1992.) Broder was later employed by the *San Francisco Examiner*, where he met his *Salon* colleague, Murray Waas.

Jonathan Broder

I asked Howard Kurtz if he was aware of Jonathan Broder's history as a plagiarist, and he said that he knew about it but had, after some reflection, decided it was not relevant to the present story. Fair enough. It is worth wondering, however, whether Kurtz would have exercised such scruples if the subject had been a contributor to, say, the "fiercely conservative *American Spectator*," as he calls it. Probably not, and he shouldn't. There is no more despicable action by a writer than stealing someone else's words and, when caught, offering lame excuses for the deed. And yet plagiarists—Molly Ivins, Ruth Shalit, Nina Totenberg, Jonathan Broder—seem to go from strength to strength, unbowed by anything like shame, honored and protected by their colleagues.

***Philip Terzian writes a Washington column for the* Providence Journal.**

SPANISH FOR THE CHILDREN?

by Tucker Carlson

LAST YEAR RON UNZ WENT TO Sacramento to meet with Republican state legislators about Proposition 227, the so-called English for the Children ballot initiative Unz created that would eliminate California's vast system of bilingual education. The meeting should have been the beginning of a fruitful political partnership: Unz, who challenged Pete Wilson for the 1994 gubernatorial nomination, is a well-known California Republican; eliminating bilingual education is a well-known Republican hobbyhorse. Instead, says Unz, the members of the Republican caucus he spoke to at the state capitol "were viciously hostile. They said that the initiative was incredibly racist, that its racism would tar the party. And anyway, they said, everyone knows that Latinos don't want their children taught in English."

Everyone, apparently, but the state's Latino voters, who in nearly every survey taken over the last year have supported Unz's anti-bilingual-education initiative by a wide margin. Ordinarily, Republicans would pay close attention to poll numbers like these. Bringing Hispanics back into the fold is something of an obsession in the California Republican party, and for good reason. The share of Hispanics registered as

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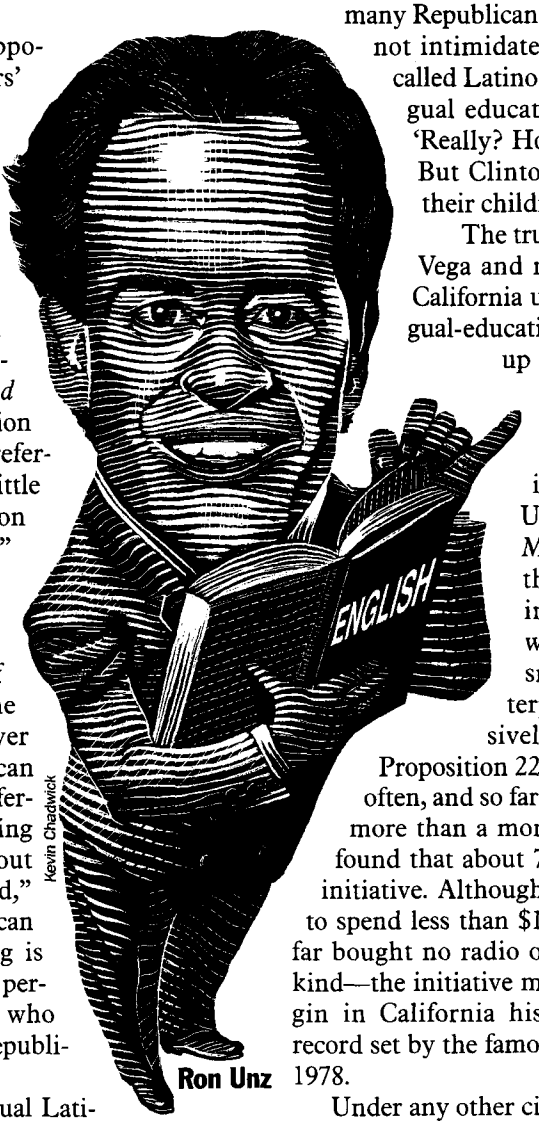
Republicans in California has dropped to below 20 percent and continues to fall. In 1996, Clinton won fully three-quarters of the state's Hispanic vote. Proposition 227, which the Clinton administration opposes, seemed a perfect opportunity for Republicans to woo immigrant voters. It hasn't worked out that way. As of last week, virtually no Republican politician in the state had endorsed 227, despite the fact that the initiative is almost certain to pass on June 2. What happened?

The race card, as usual. Opponents of the initiative—teachers' unions, Democratic legislators, and Latino political groups—from the beginning have characterized 227 as another in a series of anti-immigrant proposals backed by the Republican party. Stung by bad publicity from Proposition 187 (which curtailed aid to illegal immigrants, and which Unz *opposed* vociferously) and from Proposition 209 (which eliminated racial preferences), Republicans have done little to defend themselves. Proposition 227 is "racist thuggery," announced Steve Ybarra, a member of the Democratic party's Latino caucus. Some Republicans seem to agree. "If we get into a debate about the superiority of one culture over another," said state Republican chairman Michael Schroeder, referring to 227, "then we end up being perceived as harsh, racist, and out of touch." "Everyone is terrified," says one well-connected Republican at the state capitol. "The thing is radioactive. No one wants to be perceived as the St. Patrick figure who drives the Latinos out of the Republican party."



Kevin Chadwick

Ron Unz

Such fears are baffling to actual Latino voters like Fernando Vega, a lifelong Democrat from Redwood City. Vega, a former city councilman, has been active in Democratic party politics in California since 1946. In 1992, he led the Clinton-Gore campaign's efforts to organize Hispanic voters in the Bay Area. He is no right-winger. Yet several years ago Vega became an implacable opponent of bilingual education when his grandson, Jason, was placed in an elementary-school class taught exclusively in Spanish. "They didn't even evaluate him," Vega says. "They just put him in bilingual education. Jason doesn't speak one word of Spanish. His mother is Yugoslavian. He is many, many generations removed from Mexico." Last year, Vega became an honorary chairman of Unz's English for the Children campaign.

Soon after publicly coming out for the initiative, Vega gave a speech at the University of California at Berkeley. Screaming students promptly denounced the 73-year-old retired mechanic as a "racist." Unlike many Republicans in the state, however, Vega was not intimidated. "Whenever one of these so-called Latino leaders tells me how great bilingual education is," he says, "I always say, 'Really? How does your daughter like it?' But Clinton and all of these people have their children in private schools."

The truth about bilingual education, as Vega and many other Hispanic voters in California understand, is that kids in bilingual-education classes generally don't grow up to speak English well. Adults who don't speak English well don't get good jobs. A review of Census data conducted earlier this year by researchers at the University of Maryland and New Mexico State University found that Hispanic children enrolled in bilingual-education classes went on to earn significantly smaller salaries than their counterparts who were taught exclusively in English. Supporters of Proposition 227 have made the point early and often, and so far the strategy has worked. A little more than a month before the election, surveys found that about 75 percent of voters favored the initiative. Although the Prop. 227 campaign plans to spend less than $1 million statewide—and has so far bought no radio or television advertising of any kind—the initiative may well pass by the largest margin in California history, beating the decades-old record set by the famous tax-cutting Proposition 13 in 1978.

Under any other circumstances, a conservative initiative campaign this popular would draw more Republican political supporters than it could fit on its letterhead. As it is, Dan Lungren, the Republican gubernatorial candidate, has made a number of hostile statements about 227. Several prominent Republicans in the legislature have gone on record opposing it. Gov. Wilson, while criticizing bilingual education, has neglected to endorse the initiative. Indeed, about the only well-known GOP politician in California to come out for 227 is the mayor of Los Angeles, Richard Rior-

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dan, one of the state's more liberal Republicans.

Not that Riordan is the most visible supporter of Prop. 227 in Los Angeles. That title would go to Alice Callaghan, an Episcopal priest and self-described leftist who runs an after-school center for the children of Hispanic garment workers off skid row in downtown L.A. Callaghan first became opposed to bilingual education several years ago when she learned that virtually none of the children who come in the afternoons to play on the jungle gym behind her storefront was learning English in school. "We asked the school to put our children in English-language classes, but the school refused," she says. "If this were happening to black children, there would be an uprising."

Instead, there was a ballot initiative led by a conservative Republican. Callaghan likes Ron Unz, and she joined his campaign early. As far as she is concerned, the fact that few elected Republicans in California followed her lead is a good thing. They probably would have screwed it up, Callaghan says. She may be right.

Tucker Carlson is a staff writer for THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

GOODLING HUNTING

by Matthew Rees

WHEN HOUSE SPEAKER Newt Gingrich arrived in Lemoyne, Pa., on February 21 to speak at a fund-raiser for Rep. Bill Goodling, fewer than 50 people were present. Gingrich, who is accustomed to fund-raisers attended by at least a few hundred, wasn't amused. At a House GOP leadership meeting a few days later, he said Goodling needed help if he was going to defeat the pesky conservative who's challenging him in the May 19 Republican primary. Noting that Goodling, who was elected to the House in 1974, lacks a "modern" campaign apparatus, Gingrich told his fellow Republicans, "We need to do whatever it takes to get [Goodling] renominated. . . . We need to take care of him."

IT WOULD BE EASIER TO EXPLAIN THE GOP SUPPORT FOR THE INCUMBENT IF HIS OPPONENT WERE A DAVID DUKE TYPE OR A CANDIDATE LIKELY TO LOSE.

Shortly after the meeting, the National Republican Congressional Committee (the House GOP's official reelection operation) kicked into gear. An NRCC official, Mike Scanlon, was ordered to turn all of his attention to Goodling's faltering campaign. Other NRCC officials, too, were directed to help out. The result? Goodling now has a pollster, Tony Fabrizio, who worked for Bob Dole's presidential campaign, and a media guru, Larry McCarthy, who's best known for cutting the Willie Horton ads in 1988. There's no guarantee these campaign consultants, and the NRCC's help in crafting a media strategy, will produce a victory for Goodling. But they certainly show that the congressional leadership wants to help him.

While it's not unusual for the NRCC to work in behalf of House incumbents in Republican primaries, the amount of support being given to Goodling is remarkable. In addition to the above, GOP leaders Trent Lott and Dick Armey have trekked to the south-central Pennsylvania district for fund-raisers. Moreover, the NRCC chairman, Rep. John Linder, says his group anticipates providing the Goodling campaign $55,000 in "coordinated expenditures"—the maximum allowable by law—in addition to $5,000 given directly.

And that's not all. Conservative House members are making unsolicited calls to reporters, to vouch for Goodling's conservative credentials. And senior party officials have leaned on figures such as Grover Norquist, an influential Republican activist, not to support Goodling's opponent, Charlie Gerow. (Norquist ignored the pressure and hosted a fund-raiser for Gerow on April 29.)

Why this massive campaign in behalf of Goodling? It would be easier to explain if his opponent were a David Duke type, embarrassing to the party. Or if the opponent were likely to lose the seat for Republicans in November.

But neither of those conditions applies. Gerow is a lawyer and local conservative activist who simply believes Goodling is too moderate and has been in Congress too long. When he challenged Goodling two years ago, Gerow was outspent nearly 5 to 1, but he garnered 45 percent of the vote. And contrary to predictions by some state GOP officials, there's no reason to believe Gerow would lose the seat in November. The district is so Republican that it gave Bob Dole a 14-point margin over Bill Clinton in 1996.

GOP sources say party leaders are laboring so

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mightily for Goodling because they like him and believe it would be humiliating to them if he lost. As chairman of the Education and Workforce Committee, Goodling has recently curried favor with Gingrich and other conservatives with his strident opposition to the Clinton administration's national-testing proposal. (Goodling knew that Gerow would run again, which probably intensified the congressman's efforts.) There was some question after the 1994 election whether Goodling would be made the committee chairman, given his moderate leanings and his past support for federal programs like Head Start and Even Start. But in recent years, he's become a more reliable conservative vote on fiscal and social issues.

GOP leaders are concerned that if Goodling is defeated, they will have to respond to endless media accounts of how the party has been "captured" by the extreme Right. And after all the unwelcome publicity stemming from the California primary in which conservative upstart Tom Bordonaro beat the establishment-blessed moderate Brooks Firestone, some party officials think a Goodling defeat would be another blow to the reputation of Linder, the NRCC chairman.

If Washington-based GOP leaders are successful in stopping Gerow, Goodling will be deeply indebted to them. Having had almost no close races since being elected, he maintained a campaign operation that one Republican described as "straight out of 1958." Indeed, prior to the NRCC's intervention, Goodling's campaign staff was entirely volunteer. And his fund-raising was so laggard that from January through March Gerow raised more than he did. Also, Gerow and his volunteers started going door to door in December, and they expect to have knocked on 35,000 of them by Election Day. Goodling's team began a similar effort only six weeks ago.

Complicating the effort to save Goodling is $400,000 in television and radio ads deriding him as a career politician who breaks his word. The ads, which started on April 29, are being paid for by Americans for Limited Terms, a national group promoting the idea that members of Congress should pledge to serve only three terms. There may also be future ads criticizing Goodling for accepting over $11,000 in campaign contributions from a company that would benefit from a student loan bill he's introduced.

These ads are sure to offend Goodling's sensibilities. He represents an old-school Republicanism that is more Bob Michel than Bob Barr. Having spent two decades toiling in the minority, and having inherited his seat from his father, he believes he's entitled to the Republican nomination. "Baffling" is how he describes the conservative effort to oust him. He also says he won't debate Gerow because there is "little overall value to debates in the contemporary political system." With this attitude, Goodling may be a big headache for the Republican establishment in the next few weeks—and Gerow may be the nominee.

Matthew Rees is a staff writer for THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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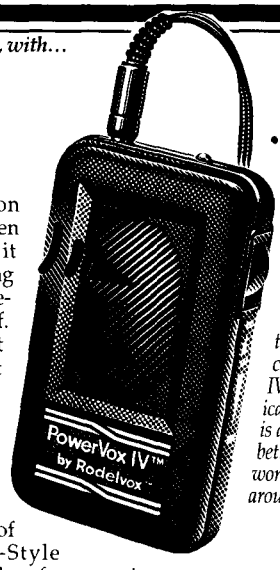

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At Last, Zion: Israel and the Fate of the Jews

By Charles Krauthammer

I. A Small Nation

Milan Kundera once defined a small nation as "one whose very existence may be put in question at any moment; a small nation can disappear, and it knows it."

The United States is not a small nation. Neither is Japan. Or France. These nations may suffer defeats. They may even be occupied. But they cannot disappear. Kundera's Czechoslovakia could—and once did. Prewar Czechoslovakia is the paradigmatic small nation: a liberal democracy created in the ashes of war by a world determined to let little nations live free; threatened by the covetousness and sheer mass of a rising neighbor; compromised fatally by a West grown weary "of a quarrel in a far-away country between people of whom we know nothing"; left truncated and defenseless, succumbing finally to conquest. When Hitler entered Prague in March 1939, he declared, "Czechoslovakia has ceased to exist."

Israel too is a small country. This is not to say that extinction is its fate. Only that it can be.

Moreover, in its vulnerability to extinction, Israel is not just any small country. It is the only small country—the only country, period—whose neighbors publicly declare its very existence an affront to law, morality, and religion and make its extinction an explicit, paramount national goal. Nor is the goal merely declarative. Iran, Libya, and Iraq conduct foreign policies designed for the killing of Israelis and the destruction of their state. They choose their allies (Hamas, Hezbollah) and develop their weapons (suicide bombs, poison gas, anthrax, nuclear missiles) accordingly. Countries as far away as Malaysia will not allow a representative of Israel on their soil nor even permit the showing of *Schindler's List* lest it engender sympathy for Zion.

Others are more circumspect in their declarations. No longer is the destruction of Israel the unanimous goal of the Arab League, as it was for the thirty years before Camp David. Syria, for example, no longer explicitly enunciates it. Yet Syria would destroy Israel tomorrow if it had the power. (Its current reticence on the subject is largely due to its post-Cold War need for the American connection.)

Even Egypt, first to make peace with Israel and the presumed model for peacemaking, has built a vast U.S.-equipped army that conducts military exercises obviously designed for fighting Israel. Its huge "Badr '96" exercises, for example, Egypt's largest since the 1973 war, featured simulated crossings of the Suez Canal.

And even the PLO, which was forced into ostensible recognition of Israel in the Oslo Agreements of 1993, is still ruled by a national charter that calls in at least fourteen places for Israel's eradication. The fact that after five years and four specific promises to amend the charter it remains unamended is a sign of how deeply engraved the dream of eradicating Israel remains in the Arab consciousness.

II. The Stakes

The contemplation of Israel's disappearance is very difficult for this generation. For fifty years, Israel

Charles Krauthammer is a contributing editor to The Weekly Standard.

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has been a fixture. Most people cannot remember living in a world without Israel.

Nonetheless, this feeling of permanence has more than once been rudely interrupted—during the first few days of the Yom Kippur War when it seemed as if Israel might be overrun, or those few weeks in May and early June 1967 when Nasser blockaded the Straits of Tiran and marched 100,000 troops into Sinai to drive the Jews into the sea.

Yet Israel's stunning victory in 1967, its superiority in conventional weaponry, its success in every war in which its existence was at stake, has bred complacency. Some ridicule the very idea of Israel's impermanence. Israel, wrote one Diaspora intellectual, "is fundamentally indestructible. Yitzhak Rabin knew this. The Arab leaders on Mount Herzl [at Rabin's funeral] knew this. Only the land-grabbing, trigger-happy saints of the right do not know this. They are animated by the imagination of catastrophe, by the thrill of attending the end."

Thrill was not exactly the feeling Israelis had when during the Gulf War they entered sealed rooms and donned gas masks to protect themselves from mass death—in a war in which Israel was not even engaged. The feeling was fear, dread, helplessness—old existential Jewish feelings that post-Zionist fashion today deems anachronistic, if not reactionary. But wish does not overthrow reality. The Gulf War reminded even the most wishful that in an age of nerve gas, missiles, and nukes, an age in which no country is completely safe from weapons of mass destruction, Israel with its compact population and tiny area is particularly vulnerable to extinction.

Israel is not on the edge. It is not on the brink. This is not '48 or '67 or '73. But Israel is a small country. It can disappear. And it knows it.

It may seem odd to begin an examination of the meaning of Israel and the future of the Jews by contemplating the end. But it does concentrate the mind. And it underscores the stakes. The stakes could not be higher. It is my contention that on Israel—on its existence and survival—hangs the very existence and survival of the Jewish people. Or, to put the thesis in the negative, that the end of Israel means the end of the Jewish people. They survived destruction and exile at the hands of Babylon in 586 B.C. They survived destruction and exile at the hands of Rome in 70 A.D., and finally in 132 A.D. They cannot survive another destruction and exile. The Third Commonwealth—modern Israel, born just 50 years ago—is the last.

The return to Zion is now the principal drama of Jewish history. What began as an experiment has become the very heart of the Jewish people—its cultural, spiritual, and psychological center, soon to become its demographic center as well. Israel is the hinge. Upon it rest the hopes—the only hope—for Jewish continuity and survival.

III. The Dying Diaspora

In 1950, there were 5 million Jews in the United States. In 1990, the number was a slightly higher 5.5 million. In the intervening decades, overall U.S. population rose 65 percent. The Jews essentially tread water. In fact, in the last half-century Jews have shrunk from 3 percent to 2 percent of the American population. And now they are headed for not just relative but absolute decline. What sustained the Jewish population at its current level was, first, the postwar baby boom, then the influx of 400,000 Jews, mostly from the Soviet Union.

Well, the baby boom is over. And Russian immigration is drying up. There are only so many Jews where they came from. Take away these historical anomalies, and the American Jewish population would be smaller today than in 1950. It will certainly be smaller tomorrow than today. In fact, it is now headed for catastrophic decline. Steven Bayme, director of Jewish Communal Affairs at the American Jewish Committee, flatly predicts that in twenty years the Jewish population will be down to four million, a loss of nearly 30 percent. In twenty years! Projecting just a few decades further yields an even more chilling future.

How does a community decimate itself in the benign conditions of the United States? Easy: low fertility and endemic intermarriage.

The fertility rate among American Jews is 1.6 children per woman. The replacement rate (the rate required for the population to remain constant) is 2.1. The current rate is thus 20 percent below what is needed for zero growth. Thus fertility rates alone would cause a 20 percent decline in every generation. In three generations, the population would be cut in half.

The low birth rate does not stem from some peculiar aversion of Jewish women to children. It is merely a striking case of the well-known and universal phenomenon of birth rates declining with rising education and socio-economic class. Educated, successful working women tend to marry late and have fewer babies.

Add now a second factor, intermarriage. In the United States today more Jews marry Christians than marry Jews. The intermarriage rate is 52 percent. (A more conservative calculation yields 47 percent; the

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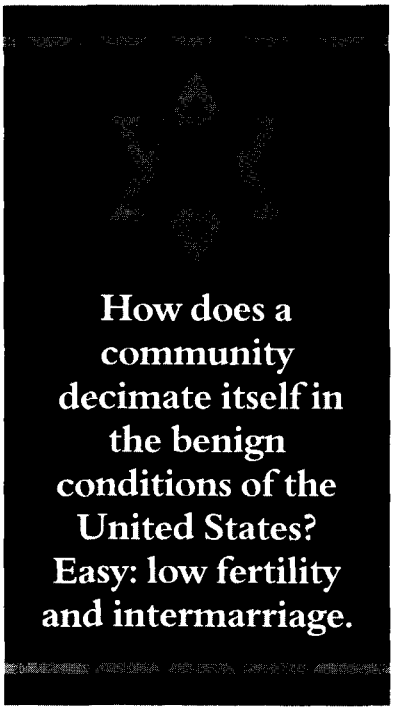
demographic effect is basically the same.) In 1970, the rate was 8 percent.

Most important for Jewish continuity, however, is the ultimate identity of the children born to these marriages. Only about one in four is raised Jewish. Thus two-thirds of Jewish marriages are producing children three-quarters of whom are lost to the Jewish people. Intermarriage rates alone would cause a 25 percent decline in population in every generation. (Math available upon request.) In two generations, half the Jews would disappear.

Now combine the effects of fertility and intermarriage and make the overly optimistic assumption that every child raised Jewish will grow up to retain his Jewish identity (i.e., a zero dropout rate). You start out with 100 American Jews; you end up with 60. In one generation, more than a third have disappeared. In just two generations, two out of every three will vanish.



One can reach this same conclusion by a different route (bypassing the intermarriage rates entirely). A *Los Angeles Times* poll of American Jews conducted in March 1998 asked a simple question: Are you raising your children as Jews? Only 70 percent said yes. A population in which the biological replacement rate is 80 percent and the cultural replacement rate is 70 percent is headed for extinction. By this calculation, every 100 Jews are raising 56 Jewish children. In just two generations, 7 out of every 10 Jews will vanish.

The demographic trends in the rest of the Diaspora are equally unencouraging. In Western Europe, fertility and intermarriage rates mirror those of the United States. Take Britain. Over the last generation, British Jewry has acted as a kind of controlled experiment: a Diaspora community living in an open society, but, unlike that in the United States, not artificially sustained by immigration. What happened? Over the last quarter-century, the number of British Jews declined by over 25 percent.

Over the same interval, France's Jewish population declined only slightly. The reason for this relative stability, however, is a one-time factor: the influx of North African Jewry. That influx is over. In France today only a minority of Jews between the ages of twenty and forty-four live in a conventional family with two Jewish parents. France, too, will go the way of the rest.

"The dissolution of European Jewry," observes Bernard Wasserstein in *Vanishing Diaspora: The Jews in Europe since 1945*, "is not situated at some point in a hypothetical future. The process is taking place before our eyes and is already far advanced." Under present trends, "the number of Jews in Europe by the year 2000 would then be not much more than one million—the lowest figure since the late Middle Ages."

In 1900, there were eight million.

The story elsewhere is even more dispiriting. The rest of what was once the Diaspora is now either a museum or a graveyard. Eastern Europe has been effectively emptied of its Jews. In 1939, Poland had 3.2 million Jews. Today it is home to 3,500. The story is much the same in the other capitals of Eastern Europe.

The Islamic world, cradle to the great Sephardic Jewish tradition and home to one-third of world Jewry three centuries ago, is now practically *Judenrein*. Not a single country in the Islamic world is home to more than 20,000 Jews. After Turkey with 19,000 and Iran with 14,000, the country with the largest Jewish community in the entire Islamic world is Morocco with 6,100. There are more Jews in Omaha, Nebraska.

These communities do not figure in projections. There is nothing to project. They are fit subjects not for counting but for remembering. Their very sound has vanished. Yiddish and Ladino, the distinctive languages of the European and Sephardic Diasporas, like the communities that invented them, are nearly extinct.

IV. The Dynamics of Assimilation

Is it not risky to assume that current trends will continue? No. Nothing will revive the Jewish communities of Eastern Europe and the Islamic world. And nothing will stop the rapid decline by assimilation of Western Jewry. On the contrary. Projecting current trends—assuming, as I have done, that rates remain constant—is rather conservative: It is risky to assume that assimilation will not accelerate. There is nothing on the horizon to reverse the integration of Jews into Western culture. The attraction of Jews *to* the larger

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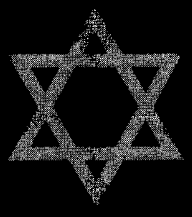
culture and the level of acceptance of Jews *by* the larger culture are historically unprecedented. If anything, the trends augur an intensification of assimilation.

It stands to reason. As each generation becomes progressively more assimilated, the ties to tradition grow weaker (as measured, for example, by synagogue attendance and number of children receiving some kind of Jewish education). This dilution of identity, in turn, leads to a greater tendency to intermarriage and assimilation. Why not? What, after all, are they giving up? The circle is complete and self-reinforcing.

Consider two cultural artifacts. With the birth of television a half-century ago, Jewish life in America was represented by *The Goldbergs*: urban Jews, decidedly ethnic, heavily accented, socially distinct. Forty years later *The Goldbergs* begat *Seinfeld*, the most popular entertainment in America today. The Seinfeld character is nominally Jewish. He might cite his Jewish identity on occasion without apology or self-consciousness—but, even more important, without consequence: It has not the slightest influence on any aspect of his life.



Assimilation in Israel means the exact opposite of what it means in the Diaspora. It means giving up alien languages and customs.

Assimilation of this sort is not entirely unprecedented. In some ways, it parallels the pattern in Western Europe after the emancipation of the Jews in the late 18th and 19th centuries. The French Revolution marks the turning point in the granting of civil rights to Jews. As they began to emerge from the ghetto, at first they found resistance to their integration and advancement. They were still excluded from the professions, higher education, and much of society. But as these barriers began gradually to erode and Jews advanced socially, Jews began a remarkable embrace of European culture and, for many, Christianity. In *A History of Zionism*, Walter Laqueur notes the view of Gabriel Riesser, an eloquent and courageous mid-19th-century advocate of emancipation, that a Jew who preferred the nonexistent state and nation of Israel to Germany should be put under police protection not because he was dangerous but because he was obviously insane.

Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786) was a harbinger. Cultured, cosmopolitan, though firmly Jewish, he was the quintessence of early emancipation. Yet his story became emblematic of the rapid historical progression from emancipation to assimilation: Four of his six children and eight of his nine grandchildren were baptized.

In that more religious, more Christian age, assimilation took the form of baptism, what Henrich Heine called the admission ticket to European society. In the far more secular late-20th century, assimilation merely means giving up the quaint name, the rituals, and the other accouterments and identifiers of one's Jewish past. Assimilation today is totally passive. Indeed, apart from the trip to the county courthouse to transform, say, (*shmattes* by) Ralph Lifshitz into (Polo by) Ralph Lauren, it is marked by an absence of action rather than the active embrace of some other faith. Unlike Mendelssohn's children, Seinfeld required no baptism.

We now know, of course, that in Europe, emancipation through assimilation proved a cruel hoax. The rise of anti-Semitism, particularly late-19th-century racial anti-Semitism culminating in Nazism, disabused Jews of the notion that assimilation provided escape from the liabilities and dangers of being Jewish. The saga of the family of Madeleine Albright is emblematic. Of her four Jewish grandparents—highly assimilated, with children some of whom actually converted and erased their Jewish past—three went to their deaths in Nazi concentration camps *as Jews*.

Nonetheless, the American context is different. There is no American history of anti-Semitism remotely resembling Europe's. The American tradition of tolerance goes back 200 years to the very founding of the country. Washington's letter to the synagogue in Newport pledges not tolerance—tolerance bespeaks non-persecution bestowed as a favor by the dominant upon the deviant—but equality. It finds no parallel in the history of Europe. In such a country, assimilation seems a reasonable solution to one's Jewish problem. One could do worse than merge one's destiny with that of a great and humane nation dedicated to the proposition of human dignity and equality.

Nonetheless, while assimilation may be a solution for individual Jews, it clearly is a disaster for Jews as a collective with a memory, a language, a tradition, a liturgy, a history, a faith, a patrimony that will all perish as a result.

Whatever value one might assign to assimilation,

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one cannot deny its reality. The trends, demographic and cultural, are stark. Not just in the long-lost outlands of the Diaspora, not just in its erstwhile European center, but even in its new American heartland, the future will be one of diminution, decline, and virtual disappearance. This will not occur overnight. But it will occur soon—in but two or three generations, a time not much further removed from ours today than the founding of Israel fifty years ago.

V. Israeli Exceptionalism

Israel is different. In Israel the great temptation of modernity—assimilation—simply does not exist. Israel is the very embodiment of Jewish continuity: It is the only nation on earth that inhabits the same land, bears the same name, speaks the same language, and worships the same God that it did 3,000 years ago. You dig the soil and you find pottery from Davidic times, coins from Bar Kokhba, and 2,000-year-old scrolls written in a script remarkably like the one that today advertises ice cream at the corner candy store.

Because most Israelis are secular, however, some ultra-religious Jews dispute Israel's claim to carry on an authentically Jewish history. So do some secular Jews. A French critic (sociologist Georges Friedmann) once called Israelis "Hebrew-speaking gentiles." In fact, there was once a fashion among a group of militantly secular Israeli intellectuals to call themselves "Canaanites," i.e., people rooted in the land but entirely denying the religious tradition from which they came.

Well then, call these people what you will. "Jews," after all, is a relatively recent name for this people. They started out as Hebrews, then became Israelites. "Jew" (derived from the Kingdom of Judah, one of the two successor states to the Davidic and Solomonic Kingdom of Israel) is the post-exilic term for Israelite. It is a latecomer to history.

What to call the Israeli who does not observe the dietary laws, has no use for the synagogue, and regards the Sabbath as the day for a drive to the beach—a fair description, by the way, of most of the prime ministers of Israel? It does not matter. Plant a Jewish people in a country that comes to a standstill on Yom Kippur; speaks the language of the Bible; moves to the rhythms of the Hebrew (lunar) calendar; builds cities with the stones of its ancestors; produces Hebrew poetry and literature, Jewish scholarship and learning unmatched anywhere in the world—and you have continuity.

Israelis could use a new name. Perhaps we will one day relegate the word Jew to the 2,000-year exilic experience and once again call these people Hebrews. The term has a nice historical echo, being the name by which Joseph and Jonah answered the question: "Who are you?"

In the cultural milieu of modern Israel, assimilation is hardly the problem. Of course Israelis eat McDonald's and watch *Dallas* reruns. But so do Russians and Chinese and Danes. To say that there are heavy Western (read: American) influences on Israeli culture is to say nothing more than that Israel is as subject to the pressures of globalization as any other country. But that hardly denies its cultural distinctiveness, a fact testified to by the great difficulty immigrants have in adapting to Israel.

In the Israeli context, assimilation means the (re)attachment of Russian and Romanian, Uzbeki and Iraqi, Algerian and Argentinian Jews to a distinctively Hebraic culture. It means the exact opposite of what it means in the Diaspora: It means *giving up* alien languages, customs, and traditions. It means giving up Christmas and Easter for Hanukkah and Passover. It means giving up ancestral memories of the steppes and the pampas and the savannas of the world for Galilean hills and Jerusalem stone and Dead Sea desolation. That is what these new Israelis learn. That is what is transmitted to their children. That is why their survival as Jews is secure. Does anyone doubt that the near-million Soviet immigrants to Israel would have been largely lost to the Jewish people had they remained in Russia—and that now they will not be lost?

Some object to the idea of Israel as carrier of Jewish continuity because of the myriad splits and fractures among Israelis: Orthodox versus secular, Ashkenazi versus Sephardi, Russian versus sabra, and so on. Israel is now engaged in bitter debates over the legitimacy of conservative and reform Judaism and the encroachment of Orthodoxy upon the civic and social life of the country.

So what's new? Israel is simply recapitulating the Jewish norm. There are equally serious divisions in the Diaspora, as there were within the last Jewish Commonwealth: "Before the ascendancy of the Pharisees and the emergence of Rabbinic orthodoxy after the fall of the Second Temple," writes Harvard Near East scholar Frank Cross, "Judaism was more complex and variegated than we had supposed." The Dead Sea Scrolls, explains Hershel Shanks, "emphasize a hitherto unappreciated variety in Judaism of the late Second Temple period, so much so that scholars often speak not simply of Judaism, but of Judaisms."

The Second Commonwealth was a riot of Jewish

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sectarianism: Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, apocalyptics of every stripe, sects now lost to history, to say nothing of the early Christians. Those concerned about the secular-religious tensions in Israel might contemplate the centuries-long struggle between Hellenizers and traditionalists during the Second Commonwealth. The Maccabean revolt of 167-4 B.C., now celebrated as Hanukkah, was, among other things, a religious civil war among Jews.

Yes, it is unlikely that Israel will produce a single Jewish identity. But that is unnecessary. The relative monolith of Rabbinic Judaism in the Middle Ages is the exception. Fracture and division is a fact of life during the modern era, as during the First and Second Commonwealths. Indeed, during the period of the First Temple, the people of Israel were actually split into two often warring states. The current divisions within Israel pale in comparison.

Whatever identity or identities are ultimately adopted by Israelis, the fact remains that for them the central problem of Diaspora Jewry —suicide by assimilation—simply does not exist. Blessed with this security of identity, Israel is growing. As a result, Israel is not just the cultural center of the Jewish world, it is rapidly becoming its demographic center as well. The relatively high birth rate yields a natural increase in population. Add a steady net rate of immigration (nearly a million since the late 1980s), and Israel's numbers rise inexorably even as the Diaspora declines.

In solving the problem of powerlessness, the Jews have put all their eggs in one basket. On its fate hinges everything Jewish.

Within a decade Israel will pass the United States as the most populous Jewish community on the globe. Within our lifetime a majority of the world's Jews will be living in Israel. That has not happened since well before Christ.

A century ago, Europe was the center of Jewish life. More than 80 percent of world Jewry lived there. The Second World War destroyed European Jewry and dispersed the survivors to the New World (mainly the United States) and to Israel. Today, 80 percent of world Jewry lives either in the United States or in Israel. Today we have a bipolar Jewish universe with two centers of gravity of approximately equal size. It is a transitional stage, however. One star is gradually dimming, the other brightening.

Soon and inevitably the cosmology of the Jewish people will have been transformed again, turned into a single-star system with a dwindling Diaspora orbiting around. It will be a return to the ancient norm: The Jewish people will be centered—not just spiritually but physically—in their ancient homeland.

VI. The End of Dispersion

The consequences of this transformation are enormous. Israel's centrality is more than just a question of demography. It represents a bold and dangerous new strategy for Jewish survival.

For two millennia, the Jewish people survived by means of dispersion and isolation. Following the first exile in 586 B.C. and the second exile in 70 A.D. and 132 A.D., Jews spread first throughout Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean Basin, then to northern and eastern Europe and eventually west to the New World, with communities in practically every corner of the earth, even unto India and China.

Throughout this time, the Jewish people survived the immense pressures of persecution, massacre, and forced conversion not just by faith and courage, but by geographic dispersion. Decimated here, they would survive there. The thousands of Jewish villages and towns spread across the face of Europe, the Islamic world, and the New World provided a kind of demographic insurance. However many Jews were massacred in the First Crusade along the Rhine, however many villages were destroyed in the 1648-1649 pogroms in Ukraine, there were always thousands of others spread around the globe to carry on.

This dispersion made for weakness and vulnerability for individual Jewish communities. Paradoxically, however, it made for endurance and strength for the Jewish people as a whole. No tyrant could amass enough power to threaten Jewish survival everywhere.

Until Hitler. The Nazis managed to destroy most everything Jewish from the Pyrenees to the gates of Stalingrad, an entire civilization a thousand years old. There were nine million Jews in Europe when Hitler came to power. He killed two-thirds of them. Fifty years later, the Jews have yet to recover. There were sixteen million Jews in

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the world in 1939. Today, there are thirteen million.

The effect of the Holocaust was not just demographic, however. It was psychological, indeed ideological, as well. It demonstrated once and for all the catastrophic danger of powerlessness. The solution was self-defense, and that meant a demographic reconcentration in a place endowed with sovereignty, statehood, and arms.

Before World War II there was great debate in the Jewish world over Zionism. Reform Judaism, for example, was for decades anti-Zionist. The Holocaust resolved that debate. Except for those at the extremes—the ultra-Orthodox right and far left—Zionism became the accepted solution to Jewish powerlessness and vulnerability. Amid the ruins, Jews made a collective decision that their future lay in self-defense and territoriality, in the ingathering of the exiles to a place where they could finally acquire the means to defend themselves.

It was the right decision, the only possible decision. But oh so perilous. What a choice of place to make one's final stand: a dot on the map, a tiny patch of near-desert, a thin ribbon of Jewish habitation behind the flimsiest of natural barriers (which the world demands that Israel relinquish). One determined tank thrust can tear it in half. One small battery of nuclear-tipped Scuds can obliterate it entirely.

To destroy the Jewish people, Hitler needed to conquer the world. All that is needed today is to conquer a territory smaller than Vermont. The terrible irony is that in solving the problem of powerlessness, the Jews have necessarily put all their eggs in one basket, a small basket hard by the waters of the Mediterranean. And on its fate hinges everything Jewish.

VII. Thinking the Unthinkable

What if the Third Jewish Commonwealth meets the fate of the first two? The scenario is not that far-fetched: A Palestinian state is born, arms itself, concludes alliances with, say, Iraq and Syria. War breaks out between Palestine and Israel (over borders or water or terrorism). Syria and Iraq attack from without. Egypt and Saudi Arabia join the battle. The home front comes under guerrilla attack from Palestine. Chemical and biological weapons rain down from Syria, Iraq, and Iran. Israel is overrun.

Why is this the end? Can the Jewish people not survive as they did when their homeland was destroyed and their political independence extinguished twice before? Why not a new exile, a new Diaspora, a new cycle of Jewish history?

First, because the cultural conditions of exile would be vastly different. The first exiles occurred at a time when identity was nearly coterminous with religion. An expulsion two millennia later into a secularized world affords no footing for a reestablished Jewish identity.

But more important: Why retain such an identity? Beyond the dislocation would be the sheer demoralization. Such an event would simply break the spirit. No people could survive it. Not even the Jews. This is a people that miraculously survived two previous destructions and two millennia of persecution in the hope of ultimate return and restoration. Israel is that hope. To see it destroyed, to have Isaiahs and Jeremiahs lamenting the widows of Zion once again amid the ruins of Jerusalem is more than one people could bear.

Particularly coming after the Holocaust, the worst calamity in Jewish history. To have survived it is miracle enough. Then to survive the destruction of that which arose to redeem it—the new Jewish state—is to attribute to Jewish nationhood and survival supernatural power.

Some Jews and some scattered communities would, of course, survive. The most devout, already a minority, would carry on—as an exotic tribe, a picturesque Amish-like anachronism, a dispersed and pitied remnant of a remnant. But the Jews as a people would have retired from history.

We assume that Jewish history is cyclical: Babylonian exile in 586 B.C., followed by return in 538 B.C. Roman exile in 135 A.D., followed by return, somewhat delayed, in 1948. We forget a linear part of Jewish history: There was one other destruction, a century and a half before the fall of the First Temple. It went unrepaired. In 722 B.C., the Assyrians conquered the other, larger Jewish state, the northern kingdom of Israel. (Judah, from which modern Jews are descended, was the southern kingdom.) This is the Israel of the Ten Tribes, exiled and lost forever.

So enduring is their mystery that when Lewis and Clark set off on their expedition, one of the many questions prepared for them by Dr. Benjamin Rush at Jefferson's behest was this: "What Affinity between their [the Indians'] religious Ceremonies & those of the Jews?" "Jefferson and Lewis had talked at length about these tribes," explains Stephen Ambrose. "They speculated that the lost tribes of Israel could be out there on the Plains."

Alas, not. The Ten Tribes had melted away into history. As such, they represent the historical norm. Every other people so conquered and exiled has in time disappeared. Only the Jews defied the norm. Twice. But never, I fear, again. ♦

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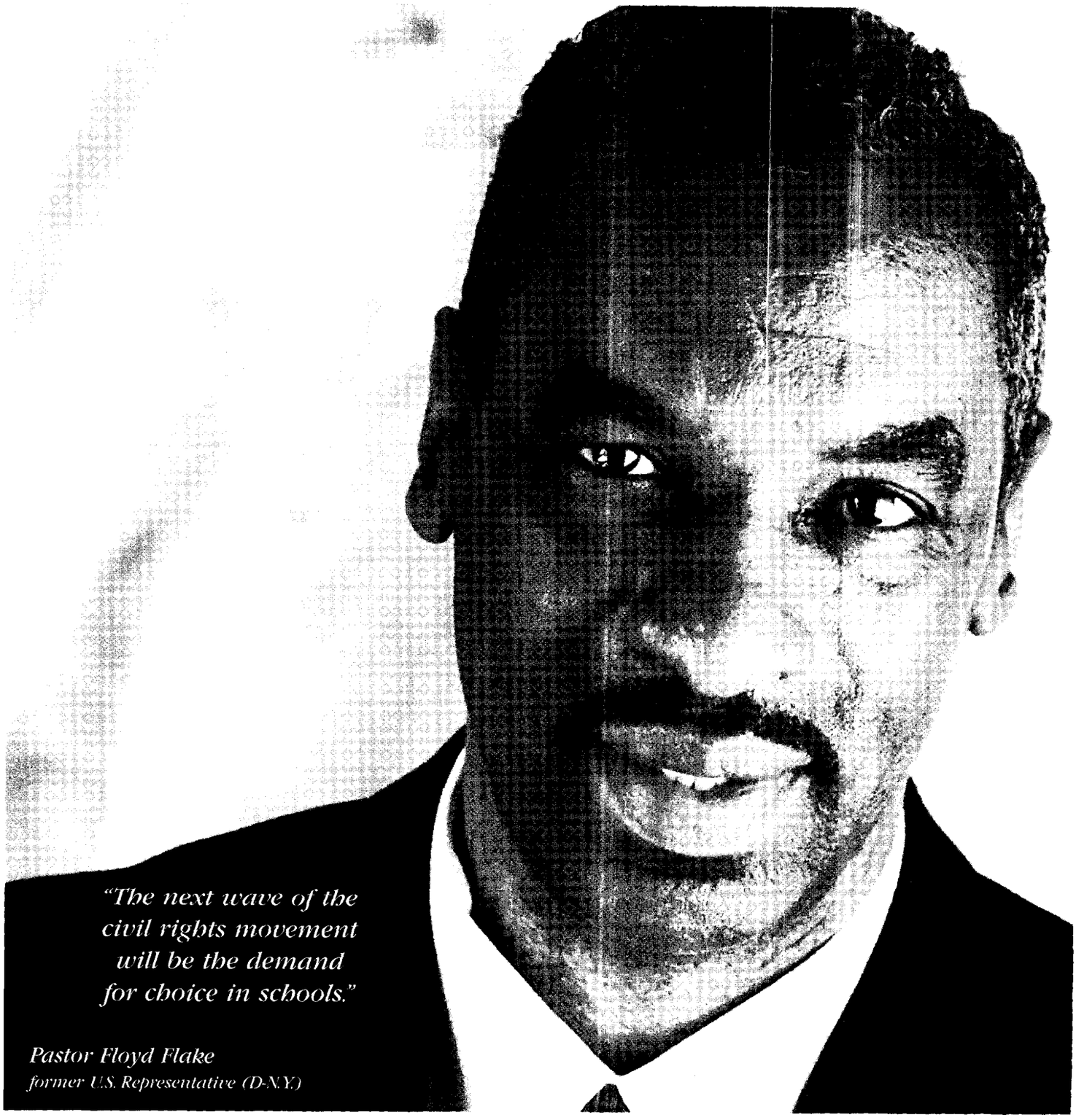

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An Anti-Communist Manifesto

Milovan Djilas's Last Thoughts on the God That Failed

By John O'Sullivan

Milovan Djilas occupies a rare place in the history of both communism and anti-communism. He was not the first intellectual dissident from within the Communist movement. Whittaker Chambers, Victor Kravchenko, Arthur Koestler, and the many party members who could not stomach the Nazi-Soviet pact all preceded him. Nor was he the first intellectual refugee from the very highest positions in world communism. Trotsky, among others, had been at the summit of Soviet power. Nor was Djilas even the first ex-Communist to carry out a major theoretical dissection of communism. James Burnham had established as early as 1940 that Marxism in Soviet practice was leading not to a classless society but to rule by a new class of managers.

But Djilas, a Yugoslav, was one of a handful of Communist revolutionaries who rose to the heights of world communism, either abandoned the Marxist faith voluntarily or were excommunicated, and subsequently developed fundamental criticisms of it. Another distinguished example is Ignazio Silone, an early Italian delegate to the Comintern and later a contributor to *The God That Failed*, the famous 1949 anthology of former Communists. And half a case can be made for Jay Lovestone, who was replaced as an official of the American Communist party on Moscow's instructions while actually taking part in a Comintern meeting there, and who, on being asked once whether he had been expelled for Trotskyism or Bukharinism, replied with mock indignation: "Neither! I was expelled for Lovestonism!" But few other candidates spring to mind.

Like Burnham, Djilas did not cease thinking after his major theoretical demolition of Marxism appeared in *The New Class* in 1957. He wrote substantial works of political theory, literature, and biography, under conditions of severe persecution, from then until his death in 1995. He spent nine years in prison (two and a half in solitary confinement); had to write in secret and smuggle his manuscripts abroad; was denied a passport for long periods; and was not allowed to publish in Yugoslavia until 1989. And yet he overcame these restrictions to become a moral and intellectual leader of anti-communism, who lived to see his analyses conclusively confirmed by the East European and Soviet counterrevolutions of 1989 and 1991.

UPI/Corbis-Bettmann

Milovan Djilas
Fall of the New Class
A History of Communism's Self-Destruction
Knopf, 432 pp., $30

His final work—*Fall of the New Class*, published only now—is both a description of the gradual collapse of communism from the Second World War to 1991 and an account of his own changing opinions from an early idealistic communism to some last sobering comments on the future weakness of a divided West in the face of post-Communist disorder. In principle, these two themes should fit together neatly, since Djilas was an enthusiastic Partisan when the Red Army pushed communism to its farthest extent in postwar Europe; an increasingly skeptical apparatchik when he helped Tito to emancipate Yugoslavia and its "national communism" from Stalin's control; and an independent thinker struggling to lift his mind and imagination from Marxist ruts when communism began its long, slow disintegration ideologically and organizationally. And this counterpoint often generates interesting insights, as when Djilas speculates that Tito's defiance of Stalin (of which Djilas himself was the principal ideologist) was the beginning of the end because it encouraged other Communist parties to follow independent national paths and so undermined the concept of Soviet infallibility essential to communism's survival.

Unfortunately, the book as a whole is curiously uneven, largely because of how it is written—or, rather,

John O'Sullivan is editor-at-large of National Review.

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patched together. Djilas composed it from three sources: an autobiographical narrative, linking all; lengthy excerpts from his writings at key moments in his career or Yugoslav history; and his ultimate reflections on past and present. But these are not always clearly distinguished from one another. As a result, great slabs of indigestible Marxist economic analysis, responding for instance to Stalin's ideas on factory management, are followed by lively humanistic criticisms of just such petrified thinking. Stalin, Gorbachev, and Tito appear on some pages as contemporary figures whose final fate is still unknown, and on others as historical personages whose crimes and achievements can be accurately assessed in the cold light of retrospect. And Djilas himself is—to borrow from the title of an anti-Communist work by Koestler—sometimes commissar and sometimes yogi in quick succession.

The editor and translator explain all this carefully enough. Still, the reader is advised to tackle the book in the following order: the introduction; chapter one ("The development of my political thinking"); the epilogue (entitled "In lieu of an epilogue"), in which Djilas is interviewed by his editor about the book's method; back to chapter two; and from there to the end in conventional style. If the reader takes this trouble, he will unroll a fascinating story of how one mind and half a world gradually freed themselves from oppressive utopian delusions.

The mind began with one initial advantage. Although from very early in his youth Djilas was a Communist revolutionary who flung himself wholeheartedly into the struggles against both the prewar Yugoslav government and the German invader, he nursed ambitions to be a poet and novelist. It was correspondingly harder for him than for most apparatchiks to see everything in terms of large historical inevitabilities. He also saw the arrogance of bureaucrats, the petty jealousies of political wives, the actual beaten-down proletarians in the workers' paradise, the personal sacrifices that led to no great social or economic gains, indeed often to squalor and futility.

For many years, however, Djilas seemed unaware that his human sympathies were at war with his ideological convictions. He remained a leading figure in a political movement and, later, regime that murdered tens of thousands of its opponents. Any mental anguish he felt emerged only in disguise. One night in the forest, when he was resting during a retreat before the German army, Djilas awoke to see the face of Christ formed by the branches of trees.

UPI/Corbis-Bettmann

Yugoslav Partisans: Tito and Djilas, 1943

He refrains from drawing dramatic conclusions from this vision. But whether one believes that it was a true vision of Christ signifying that Djilas would be called upon to bear witness to the truth, as he has done, or repressed political doubts emerging through a subconscious shaped by religion, it is surely significant that the vision was of Christ—and not of Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg, or even the young, supposedly more humanistic Marx. Even to a Marxist, it seems, Christ represented love, mercy, atonement, human as well as divine values. And for good reason. What could any of the Marxist saints have said to help one struggling with the guilt of wartime brutalities and political crimes? Doubtless something along the lines of: "Spare the old party comrades, my son, and murder only as many Mensheviks, Social Revolutionaries, and class enemies as revolutionary necessity dictates." Not the message to soothe a troubled soul or to compel repentance and redress.

For another ten years, Djilas lived with his doubts as one of the five most senior Yugoslav Communists in an exceptionally stormy political period. He personally negotiated with Stalin both during the war and in the run-up to the Stalin-Tito break. He wrote the main theoretical philippics justifying Tito's independent "national communism." He met the leading East European Communists in a (foredoomed) attempt to gain their support against Moscow. And, fortunately for us, he recorded all these encounters with an unsparing novelist's eye.

Even while he still hero-worshiped Stalin, for instance, he was not blind to the cowardice of Stalin's court, nor to the growing moral corruption of the Communist aristocracy. On one occasion, Stalin firmly denied that the Netherlands were part of "Benelux" (they are in fact represented by the "ne"), at which both Politburo members and foreign Communists became thoughtful, gazed intently at the tablecloth, nodded, etc. On another, Georgi Dimitrov, the Bulgarian Communist leader, who in 1933 had inspired the Left worldwide with his heroic defiance of the Nazis at the Reichstag trial, weakly endorsed Moscow's excommunication of the Yugoslav Communists after personally urging Djilas to stand firm. There is something tragic as well as comic in these episodes: Marxism had transformed men who had once been brave, idealistic revolutionaries into lost souls, brutal to those below, servile to those above. Over time, Djilas drew the conclusion that human beings cannot build Utopia.

Or live in it. Although Tito gave

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the Yugoslav Communists a brief period of moral energy by his defiance of Moscow, he soon clamped his own sterile dictatorship upon both the country and the party. That dictatorship, like Stalin's, expressed the interests not only of the dictator, but also of the class of party bureaucrats who managed the society under him. Djilas was to analyze the social character and economic basis of this "New Class" in his famous book of that title in 1957. But his first unsystematic stab at understanding it—and its corrosive effects on itself and other people—had been a short story. "Anatomy of a Moral," published in early 1954, described how the young actress bride of a senior Communist general was treated with disdain by the "party wives," slandered as a whore who had "trapped" him, and gradually driven to a despair that by degrees separated her from her husband. At an abstract imaginative level, it was a rebuke to the coldhearted snobbery that resents love and seeks to destroy it. In the circumstances of Yugoslavia in 1954, it was a satire on a social class that, having monopolized all power and property, had come to believe that its privileges were justified by its revolutionary past, meaning that any newcomer to the charmed circle was in effect stealing. But what made the story a scandal was the fact that all of its female characters were the lightly disguised wives of Politburo members. Shortly after publication, Djilas was expelled from the party and began his long career as a dissident.

Never wound a man except fatally; never leave a writer his typing fingers. Djilas was a far greater threat to Tito and communism in the straitened circumstances of internal exile, and even in prison, than he had been in the Politburo. His first salvo came with *The New Class*. But in the next forty years, he was to write fourteen books and more than a hundred articles, notably "Conversations with Stalin" (which earned him his second prison sentence) and his memoir *Wartime*. The excerpts that form *Fall of the New Class* show a man gradually wriggling out of the straitjacket of Marxist thinking, rather like Houdini in slow motion, and feeling his way towards a politics that matched the writer's instinctive humanism.

Where exactly did he end up? It is hard to classify the Djilas of 1995 neatly in American political terms. He seems to me the kind of cultivated but anti-Communist European liberal with whom American liberals feel uncomfortable (as well they might), but who has seen too much raw history to share the optimism of American conservatives. Nonetheless, most of the opinions he came finally to hold—and to express in the first and final chapters of the present book—give aid and comfort to conservatives more than to liberals. He sees Gorbachev as a fundamentally decent man who tried to end Stalinism and revive Leninism and, not realizing that they were the same

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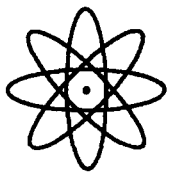

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thing at different stages of development, helped to destroy both. He believes that the subjugated peoples of the Soviet Union brought down that empire, but that "the final turning-point . . . happened when President Reagan undertook the decisive policy of re-armament. . . . Communism threw in the towel the moment its expansion was brought to a halt."

He interprets the wars that erupted at and after the breakup of Yugoslavia as evidence that Tito and communism had not solved the national problem, merely placed it in suspended animation, since national and ethnic divisions are overcome only gradually under the influence of democratic institutions, a free economy, and a middle class (to all three of which communism is inimical). He argues that terror is inherent in any Utopia since ordinary people lack the qualities that utopians demand and must therefore be forced to be free, equal, authentic, or whatever. And he concludes that history, far from coming to an end with Western capitalism as its own mercantile utopia, will continue to throw up terrible and fascinating problems we cannot now foresee.

Indeed, in his final reflections, he fears these problems will be all the more terrible if the West becomes divided and disunited and consequently fails to "play a decisive role in unifying or modernizing humanity in freedom." It is a powerful and prophetic last testament—except that Djilas disclaims any such intention and hopes that he will be remembered more for his literary rather than for his political works.

Posterity is likely to disappoint him. Djilas will always be linked with his theoretical discovery of the New Class—the party bureaucrats who under communism enjoyed a monopoly of all property and who, without technically owning anything, enjoyed most of the privileges of ownership. They rode in publicly owned limousines, lived in state apartments, vacationed in party dachas, and drank official champagne. To be sure, they could not sell these benefits, or leave them to their children, and they might lose some of them upon retirement. But because they also enjoyed a monopoly of political power, they had a secure entitlement to the benefits of power.

The novelty of Djilas's theory should not be exaggerated. Other writers, notably Trotsky, had argued earlier that the Soviet Union was plainly not a workers' state, but a new beast called state capitalism. James Burnham had developed the audacious thesis that both the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany (and, more timidly, FDR's New Deal) were variations on a new form of government, rule by the managerial class, which would shortly sweep the world. (At the very least, Burnham got the timing wrong.)

Thirty years later, neoconservatives like Seymour Martin Lipset and Irving Kristol, paleoconservatives like Samuel Francis, and national-liberals like Michael Lind would dust off these ideas to argue that a new national managerial class (variously called the knowledge class, the non-technical intelligentsia, the Overclass, and so on) was gradually amassing political power through its control of the courts, the federal agencies, the media, the universities, and the major cultural institutions in the quite different conditions of capitalist America.

Djilas's argument was therefore a local variant of a more general thesis; it accounted for the rise and power of the bureaucracy under communism. But it was also original in major respects. In particular, it embodied the insight that not only was the party bureaucracy a class whose privileges rested entirely on its monopoly of political power, but that this fact would increasingly harden it into a closed and suspicious caste.

Because revolution had been its original recruitment mechanism, the New Class suspected all non-revolutionaries as unqualified. Because it could not pass its privileges on to its children by inheritance, it had to rig the system to ensure they held high official positions in their turn. Because it might lose its privileges on retirement—recall the modest life to which Khrushchev was reduced after his expulsion—its members fought desperately to stay in office. And this narrow caste had to maintain its extraordinary privileges in officially egalitarian societies without even the mitigating justifications of technical skill, entrepreneurial ability, or economic success. Inevitably, it became both hated and despised over time, and when it ceased to be feared as well, it was contemptuously ejected from power.

So the New Class is now a subject for historical curiosity. Or is it? A social class does not disappear when it suffers a political defeat, even a serious one. It goes underground for a while, regroups, and reemerges in protective camouflage suited to the new political environment. And that has happened in both East and West.

Within the former Communist countries, members of the old *nomenclatura* retain considerable social, economic, and even political power. Some have transformed their former state positions into private economic wealth through a corrupt privatization process. Others remain in the state bureaucracy—the Czech Republic is practically the only country that imposes civil liabilities on former officials. And ex-Communist parties and politicians (sometimes optimistically granted the absolution "post-Communist") hold elected office in Poland, Hungary, Serbia, Albania, and most of the former Soviet republics. They remain linked through networks of political influence. And though their politics have changed with the intellectual collapse of socialism and the military collapse of the Warsaw Pact, they are still to be found on the left of any new political spectrum, advocating high levels of state intervention on social and environmental rather than on economic

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grounds. (We may hope that fundamental change is occurring in this respect when a Communist torturer is put on trial for his crimes.)

Within Western countries, the New Class (or non-technical intelligentsia), as seen by Lipset, Kristol, Francis, and Lind, did not depend on direct or elected governmental power in the first place. It is rooted in the government bureaucracy and cultural institutions. So its occasional electoral reverses, such as the Republican victory in 1994, are only a minor inconvenience to it.

Yet even in the allegedly Republican-cum-libertarian environment of post-Cold War politics, it has continued to advance its power in three ways.

First—and most precariously, since this is the main arena of partisan politics—by extending the regulation of society by government.

Second, by transferring power *within* government from elected bodies like Congress to non-accountable ones such as the judiciary, federal agencies, and, more recently, international agencies under its sway.

And third, by imposing New Class moral and cultural values upon those elites and institutions that have until now been resistant to them. Thus, the armed forces find themselves beholden to feminists; private corporations must hire and fire in accordance with racial proportionalism rather than meritocratic selection; private cultural or religious institutions—the Catholic Church, the Boy Scouts—must forswear traditional beliefs in matters involving God or gays; and on and on.

In short, the New Class in Western society is exactly what we should expect: namely, Bolsheviks operating in a context of democracy. And again as we should expect, they seek to monopolize political power, to dictate the uses of all property, and to render purely formal any democratic restraints upon themselves. Americans would do well to read Djilas, not as history—but rather as a playbook. ♦

B&A

CIVILITY WARS

Why Can't We All Just Get Along?

By Mark Miller

The success of a democracy is, in large measure, a function of restraint: on the part of legislators who control our tax dollars, on the part of judges who interpret our laws, and on the part of various officials empowered to execute those laws. Stephen L. Carter, a law professor at Yale, argues that a successful democracy requires as well restraint on the part of its citizens, a restraint he equates with "civility." In his new book—given the straightforward title, *Civility*—Carter makes a heartfelt plea for a return to that virtue. He also makes some very large claims about civility and its effect on contemporary American culture—some of which succeed better than others.

Stephen L. Carter
Civility
Manners, Morals, and the Etiquette of Democracy
Basic Books, 384 pp., $25

The Dissent of the Governed
A Meditation on Law, Religion, and Loyalty
Harvard, 192 pp., $19.95

The essence of civility, Carter argues, is not the outward forms of conduct we call manners, but the ability to sacrifice our own interests for others'. Civility is the virtue that allows man to be, in Aristotle's phrase, a "political animal," a creature whose habitat is civilized society. At its most basic, civility includes the qualities we need in order to live shoulder-to-shoulder with fellow citizens whom we care neither to befriend nor to insult: deference without feigned chumminess, patience for the weaknesses of others, and constant attention to the fact that those around us are humans, too.

Mark Miller is a writer in Washington, D.C.

These virtues are in decline, Carter believes, with neither Right nor Left willing to teach them. Carter argues that both liberals and conservatives are self-seeking—liberals pursuing self-interest by demanding ever-greater individual rights, conservatives pursuing self-interest by advocating the free market. For Carter, neither side answers the critical question of how we are to treat one another as collaborators in the democratic experiment. His answer is a revival of religious values, which he sees as the only way to transmit the virtue of self-sacrifice that is a condition for civility.

Hence, Carter is preaching a peculiarly American form of civil religion—a cross between William Bennett and Robert Fulghum, with a dose of sincere Christian belief thrown in. His message of self-sacrifice is so earnest as to render the book, in a sense, unreviewable—for who would be so churlish as to take serious issue with a man crying out for civility?

Carter's problem, though, is that he tries to cram too many of America's cultural disorders into his favored concept. For instance, what relationship could there possibly be between civility and grade inflation? Carter thinks he knows: Professors lack civility when they give inflated grades, unwilling to sacrifice their own short-term emotional comfort for telling students the truth. And

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church attendance? Churches lack civility, Carter asserts, when they try to make their congregants comfortable rather than challenge them with discomfiting truths—and the result is a loss of membership. These are attenuated arguments, and they illustrate a fundamental flaw in Carter's book. In seeking to explain so much of contemporary life by civility, Carter is compelled to manipulate and often distort the concept until it ceases to have any familiar meaning.

Or, more accurately, Carter has mistaken a symptom for a cause. A decline of civility may best be explained as a consequence of many forces at play in American culture. Carter's thesis has less diagnostic power than he supposes—although its moral power is undeniable.

Carter has another volume just published—a small collection of essays titled *The Dissent of the Governed*—in which he contends that dissent, rather than consent, lies at the heart of the American experiment. He begins his essays, first delivered as the Massey Lectures at Harvard, by revisiting the Declaration of Independence, noting that it was George III's treatment of the colonists that drove them from mere dissent into open disallegiance and revolution:

> In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

In other words, the legitimacy of the state dissolves when the sovereign answers "repeated petitions" with "repeated injury"—which Carter sees as happening in America today. "Large numbers of citizens do indeed feel that their petitions to their government go unanswered," he writes, "and, as a result, [they] have lost a degree of faith in that government." Carter argues that this feeling is particularly common among socially conservative religious communities, whose dissent is directed against the norms of modern society. Sympathetic to these communities, Carter worries that the government's denial of their repeated petitions could impel them from loyal dissent into open disallegiance. He goes on to describe a vision of an American government that would be sensitive to those petitions, thus arresting a downward spiral.

Along the way, Carter offers sound insights into the nature of governmental power. For example, he delivers a masterly attack on what he calls

Gail Zucker/Yale Law School

"liberal constitutionalism," that is, the use of law to increase the power of the federal government for the purpose of enforcing secular values. Liberal constitutionalism, Carter asserts, has failed to understand that all government authority poses a danger to individual freedom. From the standpoint of religious communities, liberal constitutionalism is antagonistic because it creates and enforces national standards concerning school prayer, public aid to religious schools, and so on. The states, Carter says, should be left free to treat such matters as they see fit, without any interference from Washington.

Many conservatives will agree enthusiastically with this, but some of Carter's other ideas are more troubling. Indeed, his Declaration-based theory of dissent breaks down when he turns his attention to the federal courts. Carter writes that courts are part of the sovereign, too, and so share responsibility with the other branches of government not to allow dissent to spiral into disallegiance. The courts "should be sensitive to the possibility that [they] might learn from the possibly quite distinct interpretive instincts of the public"—which is to say, the courts should listen more to what the citizens are saying and not be so quick to contradict them.

It is true that, in a technical sense, the courts are part of the sovereign. But in a structural sense, they are not. Article III of the Constitution grants life tenure and salary protection to federal judges, which provides them the independence they need to stand apart from the rest of the government and act as a check on its power. Granted, George III enjoyed tenure and salary protection as well, but his power, unlike that of the federal courts, was unchecked by other branches of government and by the popular will. Contrary to Carter's thesis, the federal courts have been tremendously successful at using their independence to check the power of the sovereign, if we understand "sovereign" in this context to mean "political majority."

Moreover, Carter's vision of the courts blurs the fundamental principle of separation of powers and leads to ill-considered notions about the role of judicial review. In what way should courts be responsive to "repeated petitions"? Should justice depend on the number of times a petition is made? On the number of people making it?

This sensitivity to popular will is characteristic of legislative rather than judicial power. There already exists the means by which the courts may be more sympathetic to "repeat-

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ed petitions"—judicial restraint. But Carter's vision would produce its opposite: an unaccountable countermajoritarian body trying to discern and enforce the will of politically insistent groups as expressed in their "repeated petitions." This would not be judicial review but judicial lawmaking.

The Dissent of the Governed is at once a compelling and a mystifying collection. Carter calls it a "meditation," which is particularly apt, as the book reimagines the structure of American government free of artificial and outmoded constitutional doctrines. It is perhaps a worthwhile exercise to undertake such a reimagining, if only to come away convinced that much of what we do is, indeed, the best we can do.

But Carter's effort is ultimately unconvincing. Although it has the laudable goal of promoting a larger role for religion in American life, it attempts to achieve this goal in a baldly activist way—by changing the role of the courts. In this respect, it fails to internalize that one quality necessary for a successful democracy: restraint on the part of its government. ♦

GERMANIC DEPRESSIVE

Berlin's Thousand Years of Ups and Downs

By Victorino Matus

Berlin isn't a city known for its warmth—there's an old joke that Hell is staffed by London's chefs, Paris's cops, Rome's train conductors, and Berlin's lovers. But it is a city nonetheless that many people now look upon to lead the rest of Europe to economic prosperity. And that raises the not entirely academic question: Is it in fact possible for Berlin to be a responsible leader—den mother of the European Union and strongarm of NATO—when from Otto von Bismarck to Adolf Hitler it compiled a record as bad as any city in history?

If there is an answer to such questions about the future, it lies in part in the past. And as the new millennium approaches, historians are taking a deeper look into the life, death, and resurrection of *Schicksal Stadt Deutschlands*—the City of German Destiny. In his colorful new work, *Berlin and Its Culture*, Ronald Taylor examines the social patterns that have forged a culture in Berlin over a thousand years. But almost by necessity, his account is concerned primarily with the two most notable periods in Berlin's cultural history: the Romanticism of the eighteenth century and the Weimar republic of the twentieth.

Alexandra Richie
Faust's Metropolis
A History of Berlin
Carroll & Graf, 1139 pp., $37.95

Ronald Taylor
Berlin and Its Culture
A Historical Portrait
Yale University Press, 448 pp., $39.95

With her new study, *Faust's Metropolis*, on the other hand, Alexandra Richie has made a bold attempt to grasp the whole of Berlin, not only its culture but its politics and history. Richie is a fellow of Wolfson College at Oxford and a blue-blooded descendant of the von Moltke family (including such notorious Junkers as Field Marshal Helmuth von Moltke, nineteenth-century creator of the modern Prussian army). In *Faust's Metropolis*, she has compiled an amply detailed and exhaustively researched history of the city.

But even Richie, with 891 pages of text and 212 pages of notes, cannot do justice to the whole of the story. In her history of Berlin she concentrates on the modern period, inundating the reader with tales from the era of the nineteenth-century Kaiser William I, the dizzying days of the short-lived Weimar republic in the 1920s, the city's sinister times as "Germania," capital of the Third Reich, and its forty Cold War years as "Flashpoint of the World." She has compiled scores of interviews from eyewitnesses, veterans, and survivors, and unearthed hundreds of eerie documents only now available in the post-Cold War opening of the Soviet archives.

Richie's account of ancient Berlin sheds some light on the city's perpetual sense of itself as somehow the bulwark of Western civilization and simultaneously the cultural inferior to the great European capitals. Because the Roman legions never penetrated much beyond the Elbe, Berlin did not share the classical heritage ultimately possessed by Paris and London. Although Julius Caesar incorporated the Rhine into the Roman empire, he refused to allow expansion further east. The Romans, as Richie explains, considered the Germans "too barbaric to be absorbed into the empire. General Velletius was typical when he dismissed them as 'wild creatures' incapable of learning arts or laws, or said that they resembled human beings only in that they could speak."

German self-confidence never entirely recovered from the Roman sneer. Through the ages, Berliners themselves have regarded their city as a provincial upstart, and the cultural comparison to Paris and London has been an obsession from generation to generation. The typical German pattern might be described as the effort to obtain the admiration

Victorino Matus is assistant editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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of their rivals in culture and politics—followed, when that admiration was not forthcoming, by the desire to destroy them.

As if not being incorporated into the Roman Empire weren't enough, Berlin—founded on the sandy soil of the Mark Brandenburg, far from the medieval trading routes—missed out even on the Renaissance and remained for centuries embarrassingly backward. As late as the mid-nineteenth century, Richie reports, "raw sewage ran in the streets."

The city was equally lagging in culture. Obsessed with acquiring the masterpieces of Rembrandt, Botticelli, and others, Kaiser William II and his art-dealing associate von Bode actively engaged in procuring paintings for the city's museums—by means ironically familiar: "Bode worked closely with the Kaiser to persuade collectors to give to the Berlin museums; if a potential donor was spotted Bode would ask William to 'have coffee' with him, and the Kaiser would then casually promise the collector honors or titles if he would consider donating his treasure to the state."

But no matter how hard they tried, the Germans could never get their neighbors to treat them as cultural equals. When William II boycotted his uncle Edward VII's annual regatta in 1896 and formed his own in Kiel, it failed miserably. "With his brass bands and heel-clicking officers William could never hope to emulate the easy, relaxed atmosphere of the British event, and his invitations were only accepted by minor nobility and wealthy Americans impressed by a royal invitation." And so the Kaiser focused on what he knew best: strengthening the military. Early twentieth-century Berlin became a giant, Prussian parade ground where officers had free rein to harass the civilian population. It was this militaristic atmosphere that helped pave the way for the First World War.

Richie shows why the German people welcomed the misguided war in 1914: Confident from victories in the 1870 Franco-Prussian war, they thought that six weeks would be sufficient for what would become the five years of World War I. "The frenzied outpouring of emotion in Berlin," she writes, "made reactions in Petersburg or Vienna look bland by comparison." Berliners, conservative and Socialist alike, became full-blooded nationalists, changing such borrowed English names as "Café Piccadilly" to "Fatherland Café" and such borrowed French words as "chauffeur" to "power-wagon driver."

Todd Palladino

Berlin's Checkpoint Charlie

Germany's subsequent defeat crushed the citizens of Berlin, where housewives had been telling their spouses which Parisian dresses and perfumes they wanted once they had conquered the fashionable French capital. Richie points out that the Germans bungled twice—not only instigating and then losing the war, but doing so in a way that created the insuperable problems of the next decades. During the war, Germany had secretly financed the Bolsheviks with more than nine tons of gold and smuggled Lenin into Russia to foment insurrection and force the czar to withdraw from the Eastern front. After the war, the successor government, plagued by Communist revolts inspired by Lenin, was forced to unleash on Berlin the Freikorps—the ruthless battalions which would later form the backbone of the *Sturmabteilung*—the brownshirted stormtroopers, or SA.

Following her gruesome accounts of the starving Berliners' subsistence on horse carcasses and rats and the barbarity of the Freikorps (including their dumping of the body of Rosa Luxemburg in a canal, where it stayed for six months), Richie turns to the Golden Twenties and the rise of the Weimar republic's "Cabaret." Her tale of the complete abandonment of Germanic morals and propriety—Berlin became a haven of homosexual bars, while cocaine use was rampant—is well documented, and she dispels the notion that Hitler's rise in 1933 brought an immediate end to the world of the Cabaret.

But it is her accounts of Hitler and the SA stormtroopers that form some of the most disturbing passages in the book. So too her telling of Berlin during the power struggles between the SA, Gestapo, and SS in which each group vied for Hitler's favor by outdoing its rivals in efficiency and brutality (a struggle resolved by the SS's purge of the brownshirts during the Night of the Long Knives).

Faust's Metropolis is not for the weak-stomached. It paints a gripping portrait of a city capable of going bloodily mad. But with, for example, her telling of the Nazis' murderous and methodical reduction of Berlin's 160,000 Jews to 6,100, Richie aims not to sicken the reader but to show that the Holocaust was directed by thousands of good Berliners—bureaucrats staffing such offices as the NSDAP Race Policy Bureau, the SS Office for Race and Settlement, and the SS Foundation for the Heritage of Our Forefathers. Hitler's maxim that "the Reich is Berlin, Berlin is the Reich" proved doubly right, as the battle for Berlin was some of the fiercest fighting of the war. Close to five thousand German

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and Soviet soldiers died battling in hand-to-hand combat for the Reichstag alone.

After the Russian hordes raped and pillaged on an unprecedented scale, Berliners openly embraced the arrival of the British and Americans—and rightly, for over the next few years in eastern Germany, the Soviets would force millions of civilians into hard labor, reopening concentration camps like Buchenwald. Anti-Communists were sent to the gulags in Russia, often accused of having been Nazis, while actual Nazis were rehired to operate the labor camps and uranium mines.

At the end of World War II, the conquered Germany was divided into four "Occupied Zones," with Berlin—though it lay entirely in the Soviet zone—also divided into four sectors. When Stalin (who appointed Lavrenty Beria, later the infamous head of Russia's secret police, as Soviet zone commander) reluctantly allowed citywide elections, the people voted against the Communists overwhelmingly. The humiliated Soviets were forced to impose their will by force—rejecting the election results and later erecting the infamous Berlin Wall to close off West Berlin, a tiny island of Western democracy surrounded by Soviet-controlled East Germany.

On June 24, 1948, Stalin declared a blockade, attempting to starve the city into submission. But the Americans staged a dramatic airlift of food and fuel, saving West Berlin without open war and establishing the pattern of Soviet-American confrontation that would continue until the 1989 destruction of the Berlin Wall in the collapse of European communism. (This story is told, with much more detail than Richie can provide, in Thomas Parrish's excellent new volume, *Berlin in the Balance, 1945-1949: The Blockade, the Airlift, the First Major Battle of the Cold War*, forthcoming in June from Addison-Wesley.)

Faust's Metropolis abounds with stirring tales, predominantly from this century, from the bitter rivalry between Bismarck and William II to the public-relations scam of the 1936 Olympics to the chaotic final days of the Führer's "Germania" (with fifteen-year-old deserters executed by "Werewolf" squads and alligators and chimpanzees roaming the streets after the bombing of the city zoo). Richie excels in her Cold War chapters, vividly describing day-to-day life in both East and West Berlin—experienced personally by the author.

With the fall of the Soviet Union, Berlin has become again the capital of a unified Germany, a powerhouse in *Mitteleuropa*. Have the Germans finally shrugged off their nationalist tendencies? Can the Berliners be trusted this time? It may be that after defeat in two world wars, after the Holocaust, and after forty years of Soviet occupation, some of the worst dross has been burned away. Certainly no visitor can imagine the Germans of today thirsting for revenge of the defeat of 1945 as they thirsted until the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 for revenge of Napoleon's occupation. Berlin is a capital looked up to by fledgling democracies in the East and admired as an economic partner in the West. It seems to be what it may actually be: a city reborn, a capital of both democratic institutions and economic vigor—for the first time in its long and turbulent history. ♦

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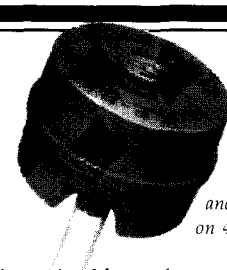

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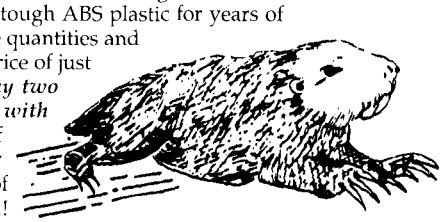

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Parody

"There is nothing that [Newt Gingrich] can say about me for whatever reason that will affect my willingness to sit down with him and others and work for the benefit of this country."
—*President Clinton, press conference, April 30, 1998*

White House Meeting with Congressional Leaders

May 7, 1998

Gingrich: Mr. President, you scum-sucking lowlife, I just want to thank you for taking time out to meet with us.

Clinton: You're welcome, Mr. Speaker. As you know, I'm just trying to put the needs of our children first.

Armey: That's big of you, you crotch-grabbing, two-timing masher. You shameless lech.

Clinton: If I were to answer you in kind, I might be able to damage your reputation, but it would be more a reflection on my character than on your reputation. I read that in a fortune cookie.

Burton: We all agree that we can't be distracted by the fact that you're a lying two-faced sleaze, a wiggly worm, a sore on the rump of the nation. We have to put the needs of the public first.

Gore: Well said. By the way, does anybody have a spare nickel? I'm trying to complete my donation to the March of Dimes.

Boehner: To come face to face with a human waste dump like yourself, a bottomless pit of iniquity and evil—I'm sure we'll all want to get hosed down with strong soap afterwards, but . . .

Weekly Compilation of
Presidential Documents

Monday, May 11, 1998
Volume 34—Number 14
Pages 227-270

H. Clinton [interrupting]: Out of my house, you conspiracy of goose-stepping maggots!

Blumenthal [from under the First Lady's chair]: Oh, most exalted one! Oh most wise! Seer of all things, wise beyond imagining! Hare Krishna, hare hare.

Clinton: If I were to respond to your inquiries it would be a reflection on my prestige but not a dissection of my character, a revelation of my reputation but not a bifurcation of my legacy, an explication of my personality but not an extrapolation of my dossier. By the way, how come you guys don't bring that little honey Molinari along anymore? She really used to get me focused on the needs of the nation.

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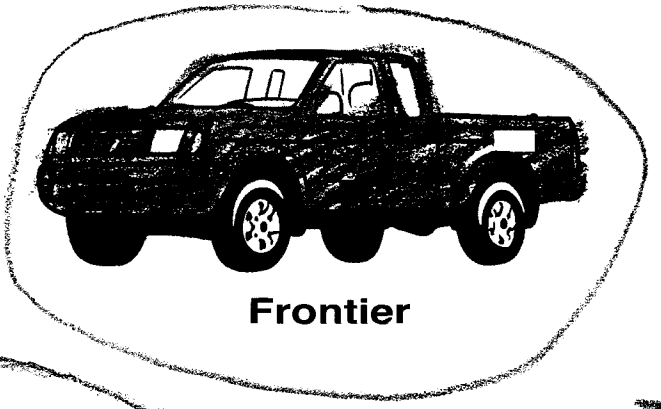

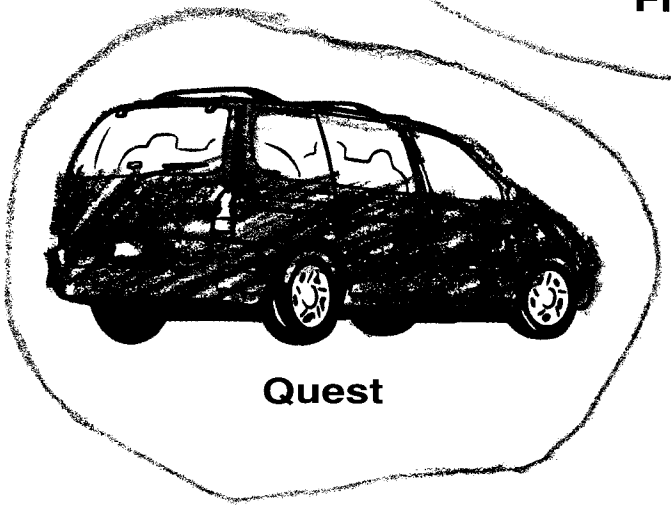

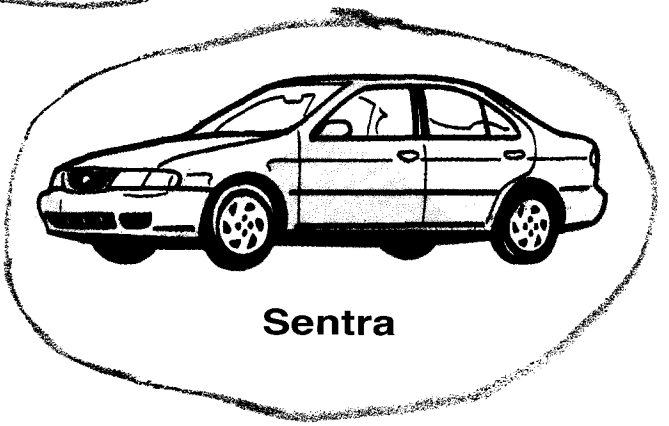

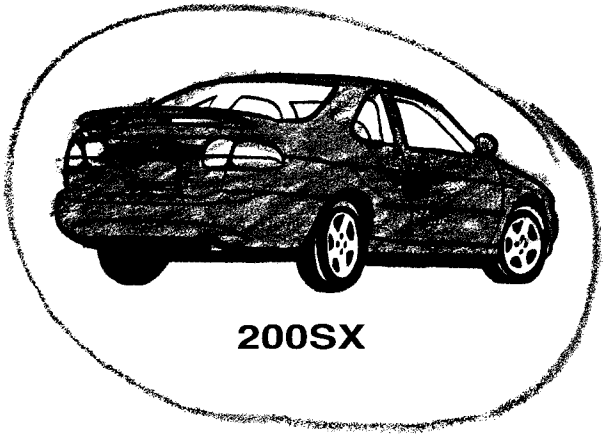

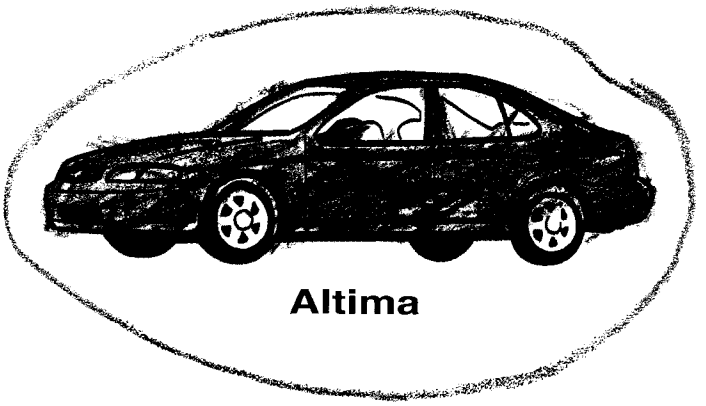

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